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FBIS-EAS-92-073 *15 April 1992*

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ROK's Yi Sang-ok Opens UN ESCAP Session

SK1404134092 Seoul YONHAP in English 0735 GMT 14 Apr 92

[By Yi Tong-min]

[Text] Beijing, April 14 (OANA-YONHAP)—The U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) opened its 48th session in this Chinese capital Tuesday for 10 days of discussion on regional cooperation.

South Korean Foreign Minister Yi Sang-ok, chairman of the 47th ESCAP session, passed the baton to Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, who was named chairman in the opening ceremony.

This year's ESCAP meeting, attended by nearly 400 delegates from member nations and U.N. organizations, tackles the theme "Regional Economic Cooperation in the ESCAP Region: Prospects, Priorities and Policy Options."

North Korea and the former Soviet republics of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan gained full membership along with former associate members Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. New Caledonia and French Polynesia were admitted as associate members. This increases the number of full members to 45 and associate members to 10.

The last time China was host was 45 years ago in Shanghai for the inaugural meeting of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, ESCAP's predecessor.

The Beijing session is in the spotlight with the appearance of U.N. Secretary-General Butrus Butrus Ghali at the opening.

South Korea's foreign minister convened the session, and there followed an opening statement from Butrus Ghali and an inaugural address by Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng.

As the conference theme suggests, this year's session focuses on setting policies for balanced economic development in the Asia- Pacific region.

Major sub-themes are intra-regional investment and development finance flow, science and technology cooperation and development of regional infrastructure.

South Korea's foreign minister looked back on ESCAP's work in the past year and reminded the delegates of the commitments made at the Seoul session exactly a year before.

"I have in mind, in particular, the unanimous adoption of the Seoul Declaration on Regional Cooperation and the Resolution on the Seoul Plan of Action for Promoting Industrial Restructuring in Asia and the Pacific," Yi said.

The U.N. secretary-general set the tone for the conference when he called economic and social development "one of the highest priorities of the United Nations."

"A number of countries in Asia and most of Africa and Latin America have faced a crisis situation for many years now. Large numbers of these countries actually suffered a decline in living standards," Butrus Ghali told the ESCAP delegates.

"Much-needed impetus to world economic recovery can, and must, be provided through the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations that should result in the opening up of export opportunities for developing countries," he said.

"In addition, adequate financing for development should be a major international concern. In this connection, the suggestion for the convening of an international conference on development financing deserves urgent attention," Butrus Ghali said.

Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, delivering his first speech as session chairman, voiced concern over the growing threat of trade protectionism, unshared benefits among regional countries from science and technological advances, and persistent economic difficulties plaguing the developing and least-developed nations.

Qian also emphasized the positive signs, such as high growth rates despite the volatility of the global economy and the strengthened economic and political status of the Asia-Pacific region.

The foreign minister called attention to the relaxation of tensions on the Korean peninsula and political settlements in Cambodia and Afghanistan, raising hope for peace and stability in the region.

Delegates begin delivering keynote speeches in Wednesday's session, when two committees are also to meet.

Proposes Environmental Cooperation Group

SK1504053692 Seoul YONHAP in English 0459 GMT 15 Apr 92

[By Yi Tong-min]

[Text] Beijing, April 15 (OANA-YONHAP)—South Korea proposed forming a six-nation sub-regional environment cooperation group Wednesday and said it wants to join the trans-Asian railway and Asian highway projects.

South Korean Foreign Minister Yi Sang-ok, in his keynote speech to the 48th session of the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), raised concern over the lack of cooperation in Northeast Asia on environmental matters and proposed that South and North Korea, Japan, China, Mongolia and Russia form a governmental negotiating group to remedy the problem.

"In light of the magnitude of potential environmental cooperation and the urgent need to promote sub-regional

cooperation activities, I would like to suggest that a study on establishing a cooperative scheme among Northeast Asian countries should be conducted in the near future," Yi said.

North Korea became a full ESCAP member Tuesday [14 April] and the other nations are all attending the meeting. South Korean officials said they want to discuss the proposal in detail during the session.

Yi stressed the importance of ESCAP's sub-regional approach in enhancing economic development, especially in Northeast Asia, and said the area lacked cohesive economic activities despite having greater potential for economic cooperation than any other sub-region.

"Undoubtedly, economic cooperation activities in this sub-region were hampered by the unfavorable political atmosphere in the past. However, in view of the recent improvement of political relations, we must search for a new model for economic cooperation in Northeast Asia," Yi told ESCAP.

He called on ESCAP member nations to assist the Commonwealth of Independent States in overcoming its economic plight and pay special attention to countries undertaking market-oriented economic reforms.

"Premature as it may be to assess the overall results of reform in the CIS at this stage, we share the view that the future course of reform will have an enormous impact on our region," the foreign minister said.

"In this context, we should help the CIS overcome its present economic hardships. It is our belief that this is essential for the stability and prosperity of our region," Yi said.

He went on to pledge active cooperation with ESCAP's Mekong River development project connecting China, Myanmar [Burma], Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, and offered to share South Korea's development experience.

"My government will take an active part in the work programs of the Mekong committee this year. We hope that our participation and our development experiences will lead to revitalizing the committee's work and contribute to enhancing the welfare of the inhabitants of the Mekong basin," Yi told ESCAP.

Yi reminded the delegates of the trans-Asian railway project that South Korea proposed at the 47th ESCAP session in Seoul last year to link Mongolia, China and South and North Korea, and he reaffirmed Seoul's intention to pursue the project.

South Korea wanted to join the Asian highway project as well, Yi said, and wanted ESCAP to conduct an extensive study of the possibility.

The Asian highway project, launched 30 years ago, envisions roads running between Europe and Asia.

Japan

Committee Failure Said To Stall Uruguay Round

OW1404120192 Tokyo KYODO in English 1131 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—The Uruguay Round of world trade talks has once again stalled as its trade negotiations committee wound up discussions without setting a deadline for a final agreement, Japanese Government sources said Tuesday.

The sources said attention is now focused on a summit between the United States and the European Community (EC), scheduled for April 22.

There is little likelihood both sides will make substantial concessions to reach an accord, making an overhaul necessary of a draft agreement now on the table, an Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry official said.

The official referred to a draft agreement worked out by Arthur Dunkel, director general of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), as a basis for a successful conclusion of the six-year-old negotiations.

Papers assessing the talks disributed at the committee meeting showed strong displeasure harbored by negotiating parties about the Dunkel proposal, the sources said.

In the difficult farm trade talks, only 23 of 108 participating countries submitted their plans for cuts in government subsidies, they said.

Most of these countries refused to accept proposals contained in Dunkel's draft agreement, they said.

Dashing Dunkel's optimistic outlook, the U.S. was unable to make concessions on the farm issue because of strong resistance from domestic agricultural groups.

The EC also put priority on the proposed market integration set for the end of this year.

The sources said U.S. President George Bush is preoccupied with pump-priming measures to stimulate the domestic economy toward the presidential election in November.

The situation will turn for the worse if the negotiations are frozen until after the election, making Dunkel's resignation a possibility, the Agriculture Ministry official said.

Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe said Tuesday the government will calmly follow future developments in the trade negotiations.

He predicted the talks will resume after Easter, this weekend.

Appeal Sent for Early End to GATT Talks

OW1404133792 Tokyo KYODO in English 1255 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Japan has sent to U.S. and European Community (EC) trade officials a letter appealing for an early conclusion to stalled world trade talks, a Foreign Ministry source said Tuesday.

The letter, dated April 8 and addressed separately to U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills and Frans Andriessen, the EC's top trade official, urges them to act quickly to successfully end the Uruguay Round talks under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the source said.

The letter presses both the United States and the EC to speed up the delayed presentation of a list of industrial goods whose tariffs could be lowered for free trade.

It also urges a solution to ironing out differences over new rules on services trade, over which the U.S. and the EC remain wide apart.

The source said the letter aims to make Japan's view clear before an April 22 meeting in Washington between U.S. President George Bush and his EC counterpart Jacques Delors, and a meeting in Japan of trade ministers from Japan, the U.S., Canada, and the EC.

But the letter does not refer to whether Japan would lift its ban on rice imports, which other countries say shows Japan's reluctance to contribute to winding up the Uruguay Round.

The Bush-Delors meeting is considered crucial to a successful conclusion to the GATT talks because it provides an opportunity to compromise on farm subsidy reductions, which has kept Washington and Brussels sharply divided and left the talks stalled.

The Uruguay Round, which should have finished in December 1990, is aimed at drafting new rules on free trade in agriculture and 14 other sectors.

OECD Chief Warns of Inflationary Pressures

OW1304124792 Tokyo KYODO in English 1125 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 13 KYODO—Japan should be careful to ward off inflation considering its great influence on the world economy, Jean-Claude Paye, the head of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said Monday, according to Foreign Ministry officials.

The officials said Paye made the remark in a half-hour meeting with Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe, who stressed for his part that the OECD pay more attention to the Asia-Pacific region instead of focusing too much on Europe.

Watanabe was quoted as saying the OECD should strengthen its exchanges with such Asian economic bodies as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

Officials said Watanabe told Paye Japan can best contribute to the world at the present time by maintaining a strong economy.

They said Paye agreed on the global influence of Japan's economy. In that sense, Paye said, economic problems in Japan are problems for the world economy as a whole.

The OECD secretary general said it is important in managing economies to make efforts to ward off inflationary pressures.

He said that in the case of countries such as Japan where the unemployment rate is relatively low, there is a concern that inflation could result from measures introduced to stimulate the economy, when they combine with pressure for higher wages.

Officials said Paye asked Watanabe to attend a ministerial meeting of the 24-nation OECD on May 18 and 19 in Paris. Watanabe replied that he wants to attend, but cannot promise due to other possible Diet business.

Stresses Regional Discussion

OW1404050192 Tokyo KYODO in English 0426 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Russia needs technical assistance and managerial know-how as badly as financial aid, the head of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) told Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa on Tuesday. A Foreign Ministry official also quoted OECD Secretary General Jean-Claude Paye as saying he hopes to deepen dialogue with six "dynamic Asian economies"—South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Malaysia.

In the 50-minute meeting, Paye said Russia lacks experience in operating a market economy and the economic reforms it is making are being implemented too rapidly, the official said. Financial assistance and stabilization of the ruble are only one element of the support required to ensure a stable reform process, Paye was quoted saying. Help with technical and managerial skills are also essential, he said.

On the global economy, Miyazawa told Paye that he believes the trend in Asia is toward a free and more open economic system.

Replying to a question from Miyazawa about whether he thinks the European Community's unified market will be protectionist, Paye said increased regional integration will not necessarily lead to greater protectionism, although increased global competition could give rise to protectionist pressure.

Paye stressed the importance of regional discussion, and said he hopes to deepen dialogue with the six Asian economies. The six meet informally with the OECD five times a year. None of the six is a member of the OECD, a 24-nation grouping of industrialized nations formed in 1961 to coordinate economic and social policies.

Paye is in Japan to exchange views with key cabinet members in advance of the annual ministerial-level OECD meeting on May 18-19 in Paris.

Carter, Miyazawa Address Environment Talks

OW1504092592 Tokyo KYODO in English 0845 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, 15 April KYODO—Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said Wednesday the current government in Washington "has done the most to obstruct progress" toward an international agreement on curbing carbon dioxide emissions.

Carter told the opening session of the three-day Eminent Persons' Meeting on Environment and Development that most of the world's environmental problems have been caused by the richest nations.

The eminent persons' meeting brings together 29 delegates, including former presidents and governors of central banks to consider proposals for a global clean-up for presentation to the June 3-14 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

In a keynote address to the meeting, Carter strongly criticized the administration of President George Bush for its failure to agree with most other countries at international environmental forums on the need to set agreed limits on carbon dioxide, considered one of the main causes of global warming.

The United States is the world's largest single producer of carbon dioxide.

"My hope is that when we reach Rio de Janeiro we will not lower the world's standards on environmental quality simply to accommodate the shortsightedness of a few powerful nations on these key issues," Carter said.

Carter also gave his support, in principle, to many of the suggestions incorporated in a declaration drawn up by a coalition of environmentalist nongovernmental organizations at a so-called "Ordinary People's Meeting" in Tokyo on Tuesday.

Representatives of the coalition, which included Greenpeace International, the National Wildlife Federation and the '92 Ngo Forum, Japan, presented their declaration to Earth Summit secretary general Maurice Strong on Wednesday morning.

Carter said he agreed with one of the main points in the coalition's declaration, namely a demand for more "transparency" and accountability in the Global Environment Facility, a fund established by the World Bank to provide money for environmental projects.

Strong, who also addressed the meeting, departed from the earlier prepared text of his welcoming speech to give his support to the same principle.

"We must heed their concerns for more transparency, more participation and accountability in existing institutional structures and processes and a more grass-roots, bottom-up rather than top-down control of resources," Strong said.

Strong also said the Earth Summit, formally known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), provides a "unique opportunity" for Japan to assert leadership in the field of global environmental security.

While Carter and Strong departed from their initially prepared remarks to make direct references to the "Ordinary Persons' Meeting" declaration, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and conference cohost and former premier Noboru Takeshita stuck to their prepared texts in their welcoming remarks.

Takeshita told the meeting that Japan can set an example to the rest of the world because it has overcome its pollution problems through the efforts of the public and private sectors.

Miyazawa, who will not be present during the meeting's closed-door deliberations, called on the meeting to recognize the need for international cooperation on environmental issues which he said have now become "global in scale."

Miyazawa expressed the necessity of enacting legislation for global environment.

"I have instructed the relevant ministries to review the legal framework to make it more suited to this new era of global concern," Miyazawa said.

Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobuo Ishihara told a news conference later that results of the review would not be discussed during the current Japanese parliament session ending in June due to lack of time.

It remains to be seen whether the review will yield new legislation or revisions of present domestic laws pertaining to the environment, Ishihara said.

Delegates to the Eminent Persons' meeting include former Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua, former Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew, two former presidents of the World Bank, Barber Conable and Robert McNamara, and former President of Costa Rica Oscar Arias Sanchez.

U.S. Rice Goes on Display at Tokyo Food Show

OW1404034592 Tokyo KYODO in English 0313 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—U.S. rice growers displayed their product at the Great American Food Show which opened Tuesday at a hotel in Tokyo. On display at the three-day show sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Japan was some 120 kilograms of rice grown in the United States.

At a food exhibition in Chiba in March last year, the U.S. Rice Millers Association was forced to remove its rice samples from the show after the Foreign Ministry warned the U.S. Embassy that the display violated the Food Control Law. This year the U.S. rice growers obtained approval from the Food Agency to exhibit their rice at the food show held at the Takanawa Prince Hotel.

The Japanese Government, which bans the import of rice as part of its policy of maintaining Japan's self-sufficiency in food, has never before allowed public displays of foreign-grown rice.

Officials sponsoring the show said the displays are to educate the Japanese about rice production and distribution in the United States. They said they will observe the Food Control Law, which prohibits the importation of rice for sales purposes.

Those invited to the show are mainly from the food industry, observers noted. An official of a trading house said he hoped the government action would turn out to be a milestone for the opening of the Japanese rice market.

Need To Improve U.S. Economic Ties Stressed

OW1504034492 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 0300 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] The representatives of the business community and labor unions have held a session of the Study Group to discuss ways for drastically improving Japan-U.S. economic relations. The Study Group, headed by Mr. Ogawara, special adviser to the Keidanren [the Federation of Economic Organizations] and former Japanese ambassador to the United States, has been organized by Sony Chairman Morita, the representatives of the business community and academicians.

Speaking at the forum, Foreign Minister Watanabe has stressed: Economic relations between Japan and the United States are getting worse and I am concerned over the possibility of the worsening economic relations triggering emotional differences between the two countries. It is very important to develop solid relations between Japan and the United States in order to build a new global framework for the 21st century. Hence, it has become necessary to come up with ideas on ways to improve the current relations between the two countries.

The forum has decided to compile a report on new measures to improve Japan-U.S. relations within this year.

Ministry Poll Indicates U.S. Distrust of Tokyo

OW1404084992 Tokyo KYODO in English 0824 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Distrust of Japan among Americans is at the highest level since 1960,

according to the latest annual Gallup opinion poll commissioned by the Foreign Ministry and released Tuesday.

The telephone survey of 1,005 adults from across America, conducted in February by the Gallup organization, showed 42 percent of them felt Japan "is not a dependable ally or friend of the United States," while 49 percent felt that it is.

Last year, 39 percent of those polled saw Japan as undependable and 44 percent felt otherwise.

The latest figures suggest that distrust of Japan among Americans is more widespread than at any time since 1960 when 55 percent of polled respondents said Japan was not to be depended upon.

But the Foreign Ministry has attempted to cast the poll results in a good light, saying they indicate "an upward trend of U.S. confidence in Japan" after a long period of decline since 1984 when 57 percent of pollees said Japan was dependable.

Nine percent of those polled this year on the question had "no opinion," against 17 percent last year.

A separate mail survey of 651 American "opinion leaders," conducted by Gallup between January and March, showed 38 percent feeling Japan "is not trustworthy," the same figure as last year, while 55 percent felt the opposite, one point higher than last year.

Commenting on the findings, the Foreign Ministry said the general public and opinion leaders "are concerned about the present level of Japan-U.S. cooperation and mutual understanding."

It said the pollees "pointed to bilateral economic relations and media coverage as the reasons for their concern."

The polls were conducted in the wake of U.S. President George Bush's January visit to Japan, which focused largely on knotty trade issues, and after widely reported remarks by House of Representatives Speaker Yoshio Sakurauchi that were taken in the U.S. as disparaging U.S. workers.

Meanwhile, the survey of the general public showed that only 26 percent of those polled felt that the present level of cooperation between the U.S. and Japan is "excellent or good," down 15 points from last year's poll.

Seventy-three responded that bilateral cooperation was only "fair" or "poor," compared with 53 percent last year.

Most of the Americans polled feel that Japan should not increase its military forces, taking into account the collapse of the cold war structure.

A record 55 percent of the general pollees shared that view this year, in contrast with 43 percent last year. Forty-two percent of the polled opinion leaders opposed a stronger Japanese military, up seven points from last year.

The poll of opinion leaders indicated a drop in American confidence in the Japan-U.S. security arrangements, which have long served as the cornerstone of bilateral ties.

Seventy-nine percent of those polled said the security arrangements contribute to regional peace and stability, seven points lower than last year, and 71 percent said they have strategic merit for the U.S., a six-point fall.

Foreign Ministry officials expressed pleasure with the fact that 70 percent of the general pollees view Japan as a stabilizing factor in the world since the demise of the Soviet Union, a 13 percent increase over last year.

They also lauded the poll results for showing that in the wake of the Persian Gulf crisis, 52 percent of the American general public think Japan is playing a role in international affairs commensurate with its economic power. The figure represents a 17 percent increase over last year.

Panels Approve Phasing Out of Resale Prices

OW1504041692 Tokyo KYODO in English 0323 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Two panels of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on Wednesday approved plans of the Fair Trade Commission (FTC) to phase out manufacturer-set resale prices on 50 items of merchandise, including some cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

FTC officials said the LDP's commerce and industry division and research commission on the Antimonopoly Law approved the plans for the phaseout, set to start in April 1993.

The items have been exempted from the Antimonopoly Law, with their wholesale and retail prices fixed by manufacturers.

If the FTC plans are implemented, makers' resale prices will be phased out for half of the shampoos, antihistamine preparations, and health drinks currently exempted from the Antimonopoly Law.

The commission deferred a proposed phaseout of resale prices for compact discs in the face of strong opposition from manufacturers and distributors of the products, the officials said.

The planned action is a response to U.S. protests that the resale price-fixing system, in effect for the past 40 years in Japan, discourages free competition.

Compact disc manufacturers are expected to cut prices on their own initiative, apart from the FTC decision, industry sources said.

This is because Japanese compact discs cost more than imports and there is a large stock of unsold discs, the sources said.

Prices of some compact discs are expected to be cut to 2,000 yen or 2,500 yen each from the current 3,000 yen, they said.

Investigation of PCB's on Okinawa Bases Urged

OW1304192392 Naha RYUKYU SHIMPO in Japanese 12 Apr 92 Morning Edition p 5

[Editorial: "Call for Investigations at U.S. Military Bases on Polychlorinated Biphenyl"]

[Text] The issue on the existence of PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyl) on U.S. military bases on Okinawa came to the fore at the end of January this year. It is beyond comprehension why the U.S. military did not make any formal announcement, even though more than two months have elapsed. The U.S. military seems to take pride in emergency expansion of military strength but lacks the ability to promptly comply with the needs of local residents.

This is because misgivings have been surfacing about current management practices regarding PCB's on military bases, as well as about past methods of disposing of PCB's and burial sites.

The toxicity of PCB's became known to the world with the 1968 Kanemi [name as published] incident, arising from PCB contamination of edible oil. It is a really troublesome and harmful material that contaminates the environment even after being burned and buried. If dumped into the sea, it will accumulate in humans who eat fish and shellfish. PCB contamination of fish and shellfish along the coasts of the inland Sea of Japan has become a problem. On land, underground water is contaminated. Our minds cannot be set at ease by burying it because its toxicity remains unweakened.

In Japan, after the detection of highly concentrated PCB's in mothers' milk, an understanding of its hazards was developed. PCB production was eventually suspended in 1972.

The air force branch of the All-Japan Garrison Forces Labor Union [Zenchuro] conducted a hearing among employees of military bases on actual operating conditions. According to their report: 1) changing of oil in transformers using PCB's was done barehanded without use of protective gear; 2) safety education stressing the necessity of protective gear and operating procedures in handling of such harmful substances as PCB's was lacking; 3) in the many years since Okinawa's reversion to Japan, PCB's have been abandoned on low ground on Kadena Air Base. The abandoned liquid waste was removed from the base by private businesses; 4) around 1989, oil was extracted from PCB transformers and stored in old warehouses on the site where District Engineering (DE) was once located.

Does the U.S. military know the relevant facts? First, I think it should report the facts to the prefectural government.

According to investigations conducted by the Zenchuro Okinawa chapter, before such problems were detected, PCB-contaminated oil was reportedly poured into manholes and gutters on the base, as there were no safety education and operating manuals for employees on military bases. Where did the PCB's go after being poured into these manholes and gutters? Surely they has flowed into the sea. There are fears that fish and shellfish have been contaminated.

We would like the prefectural health and environment department to investigate PCB contamination of fish and shellfish along the coast as soon as possible. Another point is that it is necessary to pursue the matter by investigating where and how private businesses disposed the PCB liquid waste on the military bases. The contractors should also voluntarily report to prefectural authorities. We should realize that this is a major issue concerning the health of all residents of the island.

Export-Import Bank Blames CIS for Food Delay

OW1304183392 Tokyo KYODO in English 1343 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 13 KYODO—Mitsuhide Yamaguchi, president of the Export-Import Bank of Japan, held the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) responsible for a delay in Japan's emergency food aid to the country.

Japan's 100 million dollar aid pledge made late last year has yet to be implemented.

Yamaguchi told a news conference the delay is due to a request from the CIS for a change of outlets through which the Japanese fund has to be funnelled.

The CIS asked Japan to route the aid fund through the Bank of Foreign Economic Affairs of the former Soviet Union, instead of the Russian Foreign Trade Bank, he said.

As for China's request to Japan for a resources development loan, Yamaguchi said it will take some time for Japan to review the request because Beijing has changed part of its development plans.

China has sought a total of 700 billion yen to finance 15 development projects.

The government-financed bank, meanwhile, said it pledged loans totaling 1,485.1 billion yen to finance 536 projects overseas in fiscal 1991, up 17.8 percent over the preceding year in number but down 6.4 percent in value.

The bank said loans expended in fiscal 1991 hit a record 1,698.4 billion yen, up 11.8 percent over the previous year, with the outstanding balance of loans at the end of fiscal 1991 totaling 7,666.2 billion yen, up 15.8 percent.

Tokyo To Urge Munich Summit To Discuss Dispute

OW1504001092 Tokyo KYODO in English 2341 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Japan will ask six other major economic powers to take up its territorial dispute with Russia during the July summit in Munich in Germany, NHK television reported Wednesday.

During a trip to Europe between late April and early May, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa will ask French President Francois Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to support the Japanese request, the public broadcasting service said.

The territorial dispute involves four Russian-held islands—Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan and the Habomai group—which the former Soviet Union seized at the end of World War II.

Japan says it cannot extend a large-scale financial assistance to Russia unless there is a settlement of the dispute over the islands.

During a luncheon meeting with members of his governing Liberal Democratic Party on Tuesday, Miyazawa said he would urge other Group of Seven (G-7) leaders attending the Munich summit to understand the importance Japan attaches to resolving the territorial dispute.

Leaders of Japan, the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Canada are scheduled to meet in Munich from July 6 to 8.

On Tuesday, a cabinet spokesman said Japan would welcome Russian President Boris Yeltsin's presence at the annual summit.

Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobuo Ishihara said Yeltsin's attendance would facilitate discussions on economic reconstruction of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and also provide Japan with an opportunity to draw attention to its territorial dispute with Russia.

Gorbachev Comments on Current Issues, Problems

Supports Phased Dispute Settlement

OW1504121892 Tokyo KYODO in English 1151 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on Wednesday proposed a step-by-step approach to settle a long-standing territorial dispute between Japan and Russia, Japanese business leaders said.

Gorbachev, on a two-week tour of Japan with his wife Raisa, made the proposal during a meeting with Japanese business leaders including Isamu Yamashita who heads the Japan-Russia Economic Committee.

"Russian leaders would not be able to promise the immediate return (of the disputed islands) to Japan. It is practical to solve the issue step by step," Gorbachev was quoted as saying.

The dispute has been a major unresolved issue between the two countries since the end of World War II when the former Soviet Union seized the four islands off Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido.

Turning to the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Gorbachev stressed the need for member states to reunify to tackle major issues such as the military, security, and energy problems.

The Western world will eventually benefit from financial support offered to the CIS, Gorbachev said.

He also said that a huge amount of aid, several times larger than a 24 billion dollar package planned by the West, will become necessary for the CIS if it fails to restore stability.

Hints Yeltsin Trip Not Solution

OW1504091892 Tokyo KYODO in English 0847 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev hinted Wednesday that Russian President Boris Yeltsin's September visit to Japan likely will not immediately solve a decades-old bilateral territorial dispute and yield a peace treaty.

The Yeltsin visit "will be an important phase in the promotion of our relations and in the continuation of...negotiations that will eventually lead to the conclusion of the peace treaty," Gorbachev said.

His comments to reporters at the Japan National Press Club during a 12-day visit to Japan indicated that September would be too early to expect a settlement to the territorial dispute and the signing of a peace treaty.

Tokyo has refused to provide Moscow massive aid or fully normalize relations, demanding the return of four islands off Hokkaido seized by the Soviet Red Army at the end of World War II and now under Russia's jurisdiction.

Russia has indicated a willingness to return at least two of the islands to pave the way for a peace treaty, which Japanese officials optimistically suggest could be signed during Yeltsin's visit.

"I know what the attitude is among the Russian leadership and here, and I think there will be an improvement in relations," Gorbachev said. "The process of positive change is happening."

Without directly alluding to Yeltsin's visit, he said, "I think we will be able to untie all the knots of problems and improve relations."

Gorbachev called the territorial dispute one of the "painful issues that we inherited from the past" and said to resolve it "we have to keep moving and we will reach the goal. There is no other way."

He suggested that favorable public opinion in Russia toward Japan, and vice versa, bodes well for a territorial settlement and a peace treaty, opening the way for "real cooperation" between the two countries.

Japanese and Russians have long been burdened with negative stereotypes of each other, Gorbachev said, due to "propaganda" hurled at them by both governments over the past decades.

"Initially, yes, I too was not free of certain stereotypes and certain automatic repetition of those old stereotypes," he said.

Before recent changes in the attitudes of Russians and Japanese toward each other, "it was difficult to speak of changing policies," Gorbachev said. "Now, I think that policies can be changed."

Alluding to Japan's policy of linking economic ties with Moscow to progress on the territorial dispute, Gorbachev said officials at a Japanese chemical company in Tokyo told him Tuesday they were hesitant to boost economic ties and investment in the former Soviet Union as they were "not encouraged to do so" by the Japanese Government.

Says Arms Race Cost Ended Cold War

OW1504122292 Tokyo KYODO in English 1206 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said here Wednesday it was the huge financial burden of the arms race with the United States that forced the former Soviet Union to end the cold war and take a conciliatory diplomatic stand.

Gorbachev made the remark during a dialogue with former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone before an audience of some 200 academics, businessmen, and journalists at a Tokyo hotel.

"The Soviet Union was facing the need to say farewell to the age of confrontation and the cold war, and adopt a cooperative stance (with the West)," Gorbachev said.

"I thought, 'I have to put an end to this confrontation'," he told the session, organized by the International Institute for Global Peace, a private think tank headed by Nakasone.

On his restructuring policy while Soviet Leader, Gorbachev said, "the reason I thought the Soviet Union has to apply perestroyka to our diplomatic policies is that, without doing so, we would not be able to solve mounting domestic problems."

He stopped short of giving the exact period or timing when he developed the ideas of economic restructuring, a concept credited with triggering the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev said perestroyka also led to his decision to abandon the "Brezhnev Doctrine," named after the late Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, of justifying military intervention to prevent the Soviet Union's allies from scrapping communist ideology and adopting democratic political structures.

"I thought we have to respect free choices by each ethnic group and nation and create an international arena propelled by the balance of nations' interests, rather than using violent forces," he said.

"Why are we allowed to interfere in what they (East Europeans) do?" He said. "Soviet politics long suppressed the spiritual aspects of human beings."

In an analogy for the former Soviet society, Gorbachev said, "Please imagine you are locked up in a room destitute of oxygen. In such a situation, any human potential would not be able to materialize."

"The Soviet Union was a country where prevalent totalitarianism trampled upon human rights amid rule by strong ideology and a one-party monopoly on power," he said.

Before the 1991 demise of the Soviet Union, he said, there were invisible obstacles hampering democratic progress in the values and thinkings of top Communist Party politicians and administrators.

"Without this (perestroyka philosophy), this totalitarian society would never have been able to be transformed into a democracy," Gorbachev said.

Predicts Democratization of China

OW1504064692 Tokyo KYODO in English 0625 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev predicted Wednesday that China will eventually embrace political democratization as the former Soviet Union has done.

"China, too, is now thinking about further political change and democratization...There are certain signs of movement toward political reform," Gorbachev told reporters at the Japan National Press Club. He and his wife Raisa arrived here last Saturday for their 12-day visit to Japan.

Gorbachev noted that in implementing economic reforms, China has already had some initial success in land reform and in developing small- and medium-size businesses.

"But then the question of structural reform and modernizing the entire economy makes it necessary for them, I think, to eventually democratize their society to engage in political reforms," the former Kremlin chief said.

"It's for them to decide how they do it...socially, politically, religiously—from every standpoint," he said.

Gorbachev's remarks follow recent political debates in China over the advisability of introducing further economic reforms in the wake of the demise of the Soviet Union.

Reformers headed by 87-year old Deng Xiaoping appear to have gained the upper hand over conservatives.

"There is a democratic process getting on in all regions of the world and this has to be supported and promoted—this is what counts most," said Gorbachev, who now runs a political and economic think tank in Moscow.

Gorbachev predicted that Russia will be able to overcome its current economic crisis within two years and "begin to really create a real market economy."

"If the government adjusts somewhat the course of reforms, and if the West gives some support, I think the reforms can prevail because there has been a change in the public attitude and people are for reform," he said.

He welcomed Tuesday's passage of a compromise resolution in the Russian Congress of People's Deputies that restored President Boris Yeltsin's power to rule by decree until December 1 and expressed support for his reforms.

"That makes it possible for him to tackle economic problems realistically," he said.

The resolution, passed in the face of considerable parliamentary opposition to Yeltsin's radical reform program, is expected to clear the way for 24 billion dollars in Western credits if approved Wednesday.

"It is in our common interest to end the crisis in our economy," Gorbachev said, adding that such common interest will lead all concerned to support reform.

Commenting on the recent announcement of aid for Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States by seven major Western industrial nations, Gorbachev said, "twenty-four billion dollars is not an enormous chunk of money, but it will be helpful."

Gorbachev emphasized that the money is composed of credits, "not handouts," noting that the West was able to mobilize 100 billion dollars in 10 days during the Persian Gulf crisis.

"I think Japan needs success of reform and democracy in Russia no less than Russia needs that," he said. "You should not think that this is done just for Russia and the Commonwealth—this is done for the world."

If democracy fails in the Commonwealth, or a new regime should restart the nuclear arms race, he warned, "the international community will have to spend much more than 24 billion dollars—perhaps 10 times as much for the new arms race."

Gorbachev disagreed with U.S. political analysts and policymakers "who speak about victories...in the cold war, the defeat of socialism, and the victory of capitalism."

"Some of them are saying everything must be done in order to prevent the emergence of another superpower, and that America could almost rule alone in the world," he said.

In particular, Gorbachev took aim at a draft strategy circulated in the Pentagon and leaked to the press last month, which said one of America's missions in the post-cold war era should be "convincing potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests."

Gorbachev called the document "antihistorical," saying its adoption by Washington "would only aggravate the situation."

"We have to create the world together," he said, calling for policies based on healthy global trends and aimed at promoting positive changes, while limiting the negative aspects of change.

Dissidents Urge Beijing To Release Prisoners

OW1404144092 Tokyo KYODO in English 1420 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Three Chinese who were arrested for disrupting a speech by Chinese Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin here last week said Tuesday their action was designed to focus attention on the plight of political prisoners in China.

"Both Jiang and his Communist Party never represent the people in China," Hong Jiangbing, Che Xiamping, and Wang Xihano said at a press conference in Tokyo.

All are members of Japan's branch of the Federation for Democratic China, a Paris-based international group which opposes the Beijing government.

Hong urged Japan to halt its financial aid since the Chinese Government might use it for military purposes, for which it spends some 15 percent of its gross national product.

The three dissidents disrupted Jiang's speech at a Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK) Hall April 7, protesting the military crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators at Beijing's Tiananmen Square in June 1989.

Police immediately arrested them on suspicion of violating the minor offenses act. Jiang continued his speech before 2,300 people on hand to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Sino-Japanese diplomatic rapprochement.

Hong said they were released after police questioned them for nine hours.

During Jiang's April 6-10 visit to Japan, Hong said they wanted to directly appeal to the Chinese leader for the

release of political prisoners in China and draw attention to the Tiananmen Square incident.

"But we had no intention of resorting to violence," said Che, 40, a college student in Tokyo.

The three said they were at Tiananmen Square before coming to Japan. Hong and Wang, both 30, now work in Tokyo.

During his five-day tour, Jiang met Emperor Akihito, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, former Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, and leaders of Japan's major opposition parties.

Dissident's Plea for Refugee Status Rejected

OW1404100192 Tokyo KYODO in English 0632 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—The Tokyo District Court on Tuesday turned down a Chinese dissident's plea for refugee status, saying it is too late to recognize her as a refugee because she had already been deported to China.

In handing down the ruling of the three-judge bench on the case of Lin Guizhen, presiding judge Hideki Nakagome said, "The plaintiff has been already repatriated to China and is not in Japan at present."

The judge said Lin "would not be able to receive any advantages" even if she won the lawsuit, now that she had been deported and is not in Japan, a requirement for any person to be recognized as a refugee.

Lin fled China on a refugee boat in September 24, 1989. She has been seeking the annulment of a government refusal to grant her refugee status, claiming she fears official reprisals for her part in the 1989 pro-democracy protests if sent back to China.

The ruling said the Justice Ministry deported Lin, 25, on August 14, 1991, when her lawsuit seeking official recognition as a refugee was still pending before the court.

The judge also said, "Even if the court ordered the Justice Ministry to reconsider its initial rejection of her refugee status by invalidating the rejection by a ruling, it is unthinkable for the ministry to recognize her refugee status, making any court judgment on the ongoing lawsuit worthless."

The judge stopped short of judging whether Lin had well-founded fears of being persecuted after deportation to China or whether she joined pro-democracy demonstrations and other dissident activities around the time of the June 1989 military crackdown on protesters.

However, in a separate ruling on March 26, the Fukuoka District Court said Lin joined the pro-democracy demonstration on June 3, in the southern Chinese city of Fujian, and fled China for fear of repression of protesters by the Chinese Government.

In the Fukuoka lawsuit, Lin had sought the nullification of her deportation order, saying an immigration inspector tricked her into signing a "waiver of the right to a hearing," which would have allowed her to have a senior immigration supervisor hear her claims of fears of persecutions in detail.

The government has insisted that Lin does not fall into the United Nations-defined category of refugees, claiming she wanted to get a well-paying job in Japan.

The 1951 UN convention on refugee protection defines refugees as those with well-founded fears of being persecuted for reasons of political opinions, religious faith, or the ethnic groups to which they belong.

Lin's lawyer, Shoji Yanagawa, told a news conference, "It is the Japanese Government which repatriated Lin to China despite ongoing lawsuits to save her...There are defects in Japan's refugee screening system."

"When refugees flee their countries, the immigration authorities do not conduct an objective investigation as to why such refugees had to make serious decisions to abandon their home countries and flee," Yanagawa said.

Yanagawa said he will appeal the court ruling.

He quoted Lin as saying in a recent letter that she is under severe continual supervision by the Chinese security authorities and that she is afraid.

Lin applied for refugee status on December 20, 1989. The Justice Ministry turned down the application on June 13, 1990. She appealed the decision and the government turned down her appeal on September 3 of that year.

Chinese Ambassador Yang Zhenya told a recent news conference that Lin was jailed for five months after being deported back to Shanghai. Lin was released on January 15—three days after a Japanese reporter visited her family in Fujian and videotaped the Changlexian Prison where she was being detained.

Matsushita To Set Up Joint Venture in China

OW1304111392 Tokyo KYODO in English 1025 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Osaka, April 13 KYODO—Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. of Osaka and Matsushita Communication Industrial Co. of Yokohama on Monday signed an agreement with three Chinese companies to jointly manufacture pagers in Beijing, Matsushita Electric officials said.

Under the agreement, the new company to be called Beijing Matsushita Communication Equipment Co. will be initially capitalized at 2.94 million dollars, half of which will be put up by the Japanese companies and the remainder by the Chinese partners, the officials said.

The three Chinese partners are China National Posts and Telecommunications Industry Corp., China National Postal and Telecommunications Appliances Corp. and Beijing Telecommunication Components Factory, they said.

Pending approval by Chinese authorities, the joint venture will be officially registered by the middle of June, they said.

The joint venture is expected to start production around July with an initial work force of 75 people, they said.

Think Tank Proposes More Aid to Eastern Europe

OW1404102592 Tokyo KYODO in English 0738 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—A private think tank on Tuesday proposed a package of measures to expand Japanese aid to Eastern Europe, including governmental aid of up to 2.5 billion dollars a year.

The "Japan Program," published by the Japan Economic Research Institute affiliated with big-business groups, also called for abolition of restrictions on Western strategic exports to communist countries.

The restrictions are imposed by the Coordinating Committee for Export to Communist Areas (Cocom).

The report noted that East European countries, which are burdened with large foreign debts and fiscal deficits and are faced with environmental problems, are having trouble moving toward a market economy.

To help the countries' transition to a market economy, it said Japan should provide environmental protection technologies to East European countries, such as production know-how for desulfurization equipment to Hungary.

It also said Japanese aid to Eastern Europe is lagging behind that of the European Community (EC) due in part to lack of coordination over aid between the public and private sectors in Japan.

The report was prepared by the think tank's special committee headed by Yohei Mimura, chairman of Mitsubishi Corp.

Tokyo Joins UN Sanctions Against Libya

OW1504111792 Tokyo KYODO in English 1056 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Japan joined United Nations sanctions against Libya on Wednesday, banning the sale of aircraft components to the country and ordering it to reduce its diplomatic presence in Tokyo, Foreign Ministry officials said.

Japan took the action in response to Libya's refusal to turn over two alleged terrorists as ordered March 31 by the UN Security Council, the officials said.

The government notified Muftah Naili, acting secretary of the Libyan "People's Bureau," or embassy, in Tokyo of the sanctions and expressed Japan's "regret" that Libya had not complied with the UN resolution.

Takeshi Ohara, director general of the ministry's Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau, told Naili Libya must reduce from the current five to three its diplomats in Tokyo and keep its diplomatic presence below the ambassadorial level.

One of the five is expected to return to Libya as part of a change in personnel.

A ban on transferring aircraft components, approved Friday by the cabinet, also went into effect Wednesday, though the present level of such trade is negligible, the officials said.

They said Naili did not comment on the Japanese sanctions but pledged to convey Japan's message to Tripoli.

The ministry summoned Naili earlier this month to say Japan expected Libya to comply with the resolution by Wednesday, the deadline after which sanctions would take effect.

Ohara also called on Libya to ensure the safety of the 23 Japanese nationals remaining in Libya, including diplomats, businessmen, and spouses of Libyan nationals.

He urged Libya to allow those who wish to exit the country to do so by overland or sea routes. So far all Japanese nationals in Libya who requested exit visas have left.

The sanctions also include severing direct air links and banning of sales of aircraft and arms, but officials said they do not affect Japan.

The sanctions would be lifted if Tripoli surrenders two Libyans implicated in the 1988 bombing of a U.S. airliner over Scotland that killed 270 people, and cooperates in the investigation of four other Libyans suspected in the 1989 bombing of a French airliner that killed 171.

Libyan offers to have the two suspects in the Lockerbie, Scotland bombing tried in third countries such as Malta have been turned down.

According to the UN Resolution, Libya must also "cease all forms of terrorist action and all assistance to terrorist groups" and provide proof it has done so.

The resolution calls for payment of compensation to the families of the 441 victims from 32 countries, including one from Japan, who died in the bombings.

The officials quoted Ohara as telling the Libyan diplomat that Japan is "resolutely opposed to terrorism."

Iranians Said Flocking to Immigration Bureau

OW1504115592 Tokyo KYODO in English 1037 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Narita, Chiba Pref., April 15 KYODO—Iranians overstaying their visas flocked to the Tokyo Immigration

Bureau on Wednesday to be repatriated, as the suspension of a visa-free agreement between Japan and Iran came into effect the same day, immigration officials said.

The visa-free measure, which started in October 1974, has been temporarily suspended to curb the rapidly increasing number of Iranians illegally working in Japan, the officials said.

In a related development, citizens' groups supporting foreign workers in Japan called on the Labor Ministry to take measures to protect the human rights of Iranian workers and improve their working conditions.

In a written request submitted to the ministry, the groups noted the possibility that Japanese employers could force them to work under illegal conditions, taking advantage of their weak position.

The groups, including lawyers fighting to protect the rights of foreign migrant workers in Japan, demanded the ministry not report to immigration authorities Iranians who file complaints about their poor working conditions.

Under the visa-free agreement, citizens in both countries were allowed to visit each other's country for up to three months without visas for tourism or business purposes.

However, the number of Iranians working illegally in Japan after entering with tourist visas swelled last year because of the Persian Gulf war.

Justice Ministry statistics show that more than 11,000 Iranians were refused entry or arrested last year for staying in Japan illegally.

The officials said that some 600 Iranians overstaying their visas reported to the office and requested repatriation during the first half of March.

The number of Iranians reporting to the office to be repatriated has been rapidly increasing since March 16 when Japan and Iran announced the temporary suspension of the visa exemption measure.

Over 1,000 Iranians have already appeared at the office and reported their visa violation since April 1, according to the officials.

The officials cited as a reason for the sudden upsurge in the number of the Iranians appearing at the office their anxiety that immigration authorities would tighten their crackdown on illegal workers.

An Iran National Airlines official said the cancellation of reservations on direct flights between Japan and Iran is also increasing. The airline operates direct flights between Tehran and Tokyo twice a week.

The official attributed the rise in cancellations to the failure by Iranians to obtain proper visas.

Immigration authorities said that they have increased their vigilance to counter a possible rise in the number of Iranians trying to enter Japan with forged visas.

The Japanese authorities said the number of people from Pakistan and Bangladesh attempting to enter with such visas has risen since January 1989 when Japan has suspended visa-free measures with the two countries.

SDP To Send Three Diet Members to Cambodia

OW1404102092 Tokyo KYODO in English 0925 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—The Social Democratic Party (SDP), Japan's largest opposition party, said Tuesday it will send a three-member mission to Cambodia to prepare for parliamentary debate on a United Nations peacekeeping cooperation bill.

Tomiichi Murayama, head of the SDP's Diet Administration Committee, told reporters the fact-finding mission will make a four- or five-day visit to Cambodia before the "golden week" holidays in May.

They are scheduled to meet officials of the country's Supreme National Council and the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia to discuss Cambodia's economic restoration and peace cooperation, Murayama said.

They will also discuss what Japan can do within its laws, he said.

The SDP is planning to submit its own legislation in connection with Japan's proposed participation in UN peacekeeping operations to a House of Councillors' special committee after the holidays.

The party would like to use the mission's survey results to draft the bill, Muruyama said.

Brazil Urges Miyazawa To Attend Earth Summit

OW1404104092 Tokyo KYODO in English 0956 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello urged Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa on Tuesday to attend the Earth Summit set for Rio de Janeiro this June, a Foreign Ministry official said.

The invitation was extended on behalf of the Brazilian President by his economics minister, Marcilio Marques Moreira, the official said.

Miyazawa told Moreira that he would like to attend if his political schedule permits.

The June 3-14 meeting, which is expected to be joined by leaders and representatives from 175 nations, coincides with the closing days of the current Diet session.

Moreira is in Tokyo for an international brainstorming conference on ways to fund the numerous environmental protection programs expected to result from the Earth

Summit, officially known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

Views Environnmental Burden-Sharing

OW1304212292 Tokyo KYODO in English 1449 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 13 KYODO—Brazil's Minister of Economics Marcilio Marques Moreira said Monday 5-10 billion dollars is a "realistic" annual estimate of what it will cost to clean up the global environment.

Moreira, who arrived in Japan on Sunday for a weeklong unofficial visit during which he will attend the April 15-17 Eminent Persons' Meeting on financing global environment and development, told a press conference the sum would cover "purely environmental projects."

The figure is considerably less than the annual 125 billion dollars the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Secretariat estimates the job will require.

The June 3-14 UNCED in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, will discuss how developed countries will come up with the sum. Since it is a developing country and the conference's host, Brazil's more "realistic" stand could influence other developing nations.

Moreira said the cost of environmental preservation will be huge, but added that developing countries at UNCED will have to be "pragmatic" if they are to gain the support of developed countries.

Moreira called for flexibility in funding environmental preservation through alternatives to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), which is managed by the World Bank, United Nations Development Program and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

The comments are at odds with the view expressed by UNCED Secretary General Maurice Strong, who has said it would be unrealistic to set up another organization to oversee the distribution of such funds.

In a discussion paper for the Eminent Persons' Meeting, details of which became known Monday, Strong proposes funds be found through existing institutions, including the World Bank and GEF.

But Moreira said he would not want to see funding limited to such sources.

"I only ask that in this area, governance and scope be enlarged and we not leave the decisions in the hands of World Bank bureaucrats," Moreira said.

"We are not dogmatic about that. It is possible to broaden the scope and decision making process of the GEF and not make it the main channel for those environmental projects."

The Eminent Persons' Meeting is a prelude to UNCED which will consider how best to effect a sustainable future for mankind in environmental and economic terms.

Moreira said a preliminary UNCED conference in New York in March failed to resolve the issue of how to pay for preserving the environment because "no major country wanted to commit to a stance on overseas development assistance levels."

"That is, I think, an outrageous position when so much is at stake," he said.

Moreira said developed countries will have to foot a higher bill for environmental protection than developing countries since they have the financial resources.

"But we do not want to make a game of developing countries and developed countries shifting the responsibility for the problem," he said.

"Of course, the developed countries have more resources, so they should contribute more.

"This does not mean that the developing countries are not responsible. Let's join hands to meet the enormous challenge.

"That is in the interests of all humanity."

Among about 30 other participants at the Eminent Persons' Meeting are former Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew, former United States President Jimmy Carter, President of the Asian Development Bank Kimimasa Tarumizu, and former President of the World Bank Barber Conable.

Asks Environmental Cleanup Help

OW1404065692 Tokyo KYODO in English 0540 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Brazil's Minister of Economics Marcilio Marques Moreira expressed hope Tuesday that Japan will play a leading role in providing the cost of cleaning up the global environment, Japanese officials said.

Moreira called on Japanese Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata and told him he hopes Japan will play such a role at the scheduled earth summit on June 3-14 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, officially called the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the officials said.

A preliminary UNCED conference in New York in March failed to agree on ways of paying the cost of preserving the environment.

Moreira is in Japan on a weeklong unofficial visit to attend the three-day eminent persons' meeting on financing global environment and development, which opens Wednesday in Tokyo as a prelude to the Rio de Janeiro conference.

Hata told Moreira that private industries should cooperate in protecting the environment, while countries of the world should deepen understanding of environmental issues, the officials said.

Earth Summit Organizer Urges Tokyo's Leadership

OW1404102192 Tokyo KYODO in English 0840 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—The chief organizer of the Rio Earth Summit called on Japan Tuesday to exert global leadership on the environment and share its successes in fighting pollution with other nations.

"We expect Japan to assert at the global level the same kind of strong and effective leadership that Japan has demonstrated in dealing with domestic environmental issues," said Maurice Strong, organizer of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), popularly referred to as the Earth Summit.

Calling Japan's environmental record it's "second miracle" after its economic successes, Strong said that achievements in energy efficiency and lowering air and water pollution have prepared Japan for a top leadership role.

Strong made the remarks on the eve of a closed-door international meeting to ponder ways of raising some 70 billion dollars needed to help developing nations implement a host of environmental proposals to be adopted at the June 3-14 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Some 25 prominent government leaders, former leaders, and financiers are gathering for the three-day Tokyo brainstorming session, officially called the Eminent Persons' Meeting on Financing Global Environment and Development.

The results of the private discussions are expected to influence government decision making, however they will not be binding.

The developing countries are expected to require some 125 billion dollars annually for implementing a comprehensive environmental protection program, Strong said.

Of that, 55 billion dollars is already being supplied in the form of development assistance, leaving a shortfall of 70 billion dollars, of which the developing countries are expected to pick up 80 percent and the industrialized countries the remaining 20 percent.

The Eminent Persons' session, which opens Wednesday, is being hosted by former Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita and Gaishi Hiraiwa, chairman of the influential Japan Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren).

Among the participants are former Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, and President of the Asian Development Bank Kimimasa Tarumizu.

Strong said he expects the group to address a key concern that thwarted progress toward agreement on fi..ancing at a recent meeting in New York, namely administration of the Global Environment Facility, a candidate organization for overseeing distribution of a portion of the funds.

Environmentalists maintain that the two-year-old Global Environment Facility, which is operated by the World Bank in conjunction with the UN environment program and the UN development program, has failed to take measures to ensure that its projects do not harm the environment.

They also object to the what they call the secrecy under which projects are decided upon, which they say prevent public scrutiny.

The Global Environment Facility was launched in 1990 to provide grants and technical assistance to poor countries in the areas of global warming, pollution of international waters, nature preservation, and protection of the ozone layer.

Tokyo Postpones Decision on Environment Tax

OW1504103092 Tokyo KYODO in English 0958 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Japan will postpone deciding on whether to introduce an environment tax until after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June, a government spokesman said Wednesday.

Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Noboru Ishihara acknowledged that government ministries are proceeding with independent feasibility studies on an environment tax, but noted that Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa has not issued any directives.

Miyazawa, who faces his first test in nationwide polls when elections for the House of Councillors are held in July, expressed reluctance at a news conference Monday to introduce new taxes.

Ishihara indicated that Japan would delay decision-making on finding new funds for the global environment until after burden-sharing between industrialized and developing nations is discussed at the summit.

Ishihara's remarks came as an international group of former heads of government and other prominent leaders convened here to discuss ways to raise massive funds needed to implement environmental programs to be agreed to at the June 3-14 Earth Summit.

Organizers of the Earth Summit, formally called the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, estimate that 70 billion dollars will be needed annually to help developing countries attack environmental problems.

The money is in addition to an annual 55 billion dollars already provided by financial aid programs.

The Finance Ministry and the Environment Agency are currently studying new tax schemes to fund reduced emissions of carbon dioxide, a key contributor to global warming, and environmental protection programs in developing countries.

Among the plans being examined are a levy on oil products, and increased taxes on tobacco or liquor.

A senior official at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry said a comprehensive study should be made of the new tax scheme by taking into consideration Japan's economic expansion and energy supplies as well as environment.

The official, who declined to be named, said the 3 percent consumption tax should also be considered as a source of revenue for the planned tax.

The ministry estimates that global environmental conservation will cost at least 1 trillion yen.

Corrupt Politicians To Lose Contesting Rights

OW1504141792 Tokyo KYODO in English 1334 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Ruling and opposition parties agreed Wednesday to ban legislators serving suspended prison sentences for taking bribes from contesting elections, party officials said.

The agreement, reached at a meeting of representatives of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the four major opposition parties, calls for an amendment to the nation's criminal codes.

It would relieve legislators convicted of accepting bribes and serving suspended jail sentences of the legal right to seek reelection during their probation period.

Under current public election laws, legislators convicted of buying votes are barred from seeking reelection.

The new proposal is seeking to apply this tough penalty to legislators convicted of taking bribes in exchange for favors, political analysts said.

A government source said there is no problem in suspending the legal rights of politicans to seek reelection if they have abused the power of their elected office.

The agreement comes at a time when a series of money scandals involving politicians have pushed the public support rating for the five-month administration of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa to the 20 percent range.

Miyazawa has repeatedly vowed to clean out Japan's money-dominated politics and restore public trust in the integrity of Japanese political system.

Ministry To Advise Disclosure of 'Tobashi' Deals

OW1404005892 Tokyo KYODO in English 2336 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—The Ministry of Finance (MOF) plans to ask securities companies and business corporations to disclose information on "tobashi" (flying), a practice aimed at gaining funds to compensate clients for investment losses, the NIHON KEIZAI SHIMBUN reported Tuesday.

The information will be made public in financial statements, the economic daily said. Specific ways to disclose information will be worked out through talks with the Japanese Institute of Certified Public Accountants, it said. The ministry intends to disclose any questionable deals that come to light, it said.

In the year that ended on January 31, 1992, Tokyu Department Store Co. wrote off 11 billion yen in extraordinary losses it recorded in tobashi deals with Daiwa Securities Co.

Plan for Early Public Works Spending Endorsed

OW1404064992 Tokyo KYODO in English 0532 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—The government on Tuesday endorsed a detailed plan for public works spending for the first half of fiscal 1992 which will see 75.2 percent of the total outlays disbursed in the six months from April 1, officials said. A special coordination committee under the cabinet, headed by Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata, approved the plan, the officials said.

The spending plan calls for the disbursements in the first half of 11,308.5 billion yen out of the total 15,033.0 billion yen earmarked for public works and related expenditures for fiscal 1992. The early disbursements came in line with the fiscal stimulus package the government announced on March 31 to give a boost to the economy.

The public works spending in the first half of the fiscal year will increase 1,564.1 billion yen, or 16.1 percent, from the same period in fiscal 1991, when 68.3 percent of the 14,261.7 billion yen for public works projects was mobilized in the first half.

The government's spending package designed to provide a fiscal thrust to the stagnating economy highlights the front-loading of public works spending and other steps to stimulate corporate capital investments.

The plan approved Tuesday says 3,502.6 billion yen out of the 11,308.5 billion yen to be spent in the first half will come from general-account spending, and an additional 4,978.9 billion yen from special accounts. The remaining 2,827.0 billion yen will be spent by public corporations and enterprises, according to the plan.

Economists are looking for a sizable supplementary budget to compensate for the thin expenditures in the second half.

A Finance Ministry official, however, said, "We are not considering any additional public works spending at the moment."

BOJ Reports Marginal Wholesale Price Rises

OW1404105292 Tokyo KYODO in English 1021 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Japan's overall wholesale prices edged up 0.3 percent in March from February, but declined 1.4 percent from a year earlier, the Bank of Japan (BOJ) said Tuesday.

The wholesale price index against the base of 100 in 1985 stood at 90.0 in March.

Domestic wholesale prices slipped 0.1 percent from the previous month and fell 0.8 percent from the year-earlier level, the BOJ said. It was the largest year-on-year decline since December, 1988, the bank said.

The domestic whole price index stood at 95.8 in March.

A BOJ official said, "We don't discern any significant change in the stable price trend in recent months."

In fiscal 1991 ended March 31, overall wholesale prices dropped 0.7 percent from the previous fiscal year for the first decline since fiscal 1988, the central bank said.

The domestic component of the index rose a tame 0.6 percent in fiscal 1991, down from a 1.5 percent gain in the previous fiscal year.

Prices of chemical products fell in March due to soft demand and falling prices of materials, the bank said. Prices of oil products, steel. eggs, and pork also fell sharply.

On the other hand, prices of nonferrous metals and processed foods climbed.

The dollar's rise against the yen since February pushed up export and import prices, by 2.3 and 2.0 percent, respectively, from the previous month.

Export prices, however, declined 1.7 percent from a year earlier, while import prices dropped 8.7 percent as the dollar was 3.2 percent lower compared with the year-earlier level.

The dollar traded at an average 132.73 yen in March, up 4.1 percent from 127.49 yen in February but down from 137.10 yen in March, 1991.

MITI Study: Smaller Firms More Pessimistic

OW1504074292 Tokyo KYODO in English 0720 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—Japan's small- and medium-scale companies feel deeper pessimism about their business prospects, as the economic slowdown continues, according to a government report released Wednesday.

The survey by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) said the business confidence index for the first quarter of this year worsened to minus 16.4, compared with minus 6.8 posted in the previous quarter.

The index represents the percentage of companies that reply they are happy with their business outlook, minus the proportion of pessimistic firms.

The MITI survey, covering more than 17,000 small- to medium-sized companies, was conducted in mid-March before the government announced a package of measures to boost the economy and the Bank of Japan (BOJ) cut the official discount rate by 0.75 percentage point on April 1.

The sales index for the January-March quarter, at minus 8.4, plunged into the minus column for the first time in 18 quarters. The previous quarter saw the index at 5.8.

The index on pretax profits stood at minus 18.2, almost double the minus 9.3 reported for the October-December period.

Smaller businesses expect depressed business conditions in the months to come, with the business sentiment index for the April-June quarter standing at minus 18.3.

Takatori Tapped as Budget Committee Chairman

OW1404065592 Tokyo KYODO in English 0511 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—A former director general of the management and coordination agency, Osamu Takatori, has been tapped as new chairman of the House of Representatives Budget Committee after the death of Shinjiro Yamamura, ruling party sources said Tuesday.

The sources within the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said the party will make a formal decision on the appointment after a party-sponsored funeral for Yamamura on April 27. Yamamura, chairman of the powerful lower house budget panel, was reportedly stabbed to death by his mentally disturbed daughter on Sunday.

Takatori, a former member of the Niigata Prefectural Assembly, has been returned to the House of Representatives eight times from Niigata Prefecture's No. 4 Constituency.

Like Yamamura, Takatori, 62, belongs to the Takeshita faction, the LDP's largest faction led by former Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita.

Advisory Council Urges Higher Living Standards

OW1504093292 Tokyo KYODO in English 0854 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 15 KYODO—An interim report published Wednesday by an advisory council to the prime minister called for shorter working hours and better housing to improve the standard of living in Japan.

The Economic Council compiled the report in connection with its ongoing discussions on Japan's new five-year economic management program, starting in fiscal 1992, which began on April 1.

The council is expected to publish a final report this summer.

The interim report included no specific figures such as economic growth targets.

It said the council will try to set specific targets for working hours and the quality of housing and clearly define a policy concept for relocation of the capital from Tokyo.

The council will also seek to work out measures for correcting Japan's trade and other imbalances with other countries and make proposals on protecting the global environment, the report said.

It will also make proposals on reforming the business-oriented Japanese society, on making the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries more attractive, and on improving the social capital to help improve living standards.

White Paper Urges Conservation of Rain Forests

OW1404030892 Tokyo KYODO in English 0206 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 14 KYODO—Japan should promote international efforts to conserve and replant tropical rain forests as the world's top importer of tropical timber, the government said in a white paper published Tuesday.

The annual white paper on forestry for fiscal 1991 was approved by the cabinet when it was presented by Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Minister Masami Tanabu. The paper also called for stepped-up efforts to improve the social infrastructure, such as roads and sewers, in rural communities in a bid to stem a steady decrease in the number of forestry workers.

Noting that the number of forestry workers fell to 110,000 in 1990 from 440,000 in 1960, the paper said that if the present trend continues, it would become difficult to maintain the forestry industry. The shortage of forestry workers could affect government plans to shift from imports to local production of timber in 10 million hectares of man-made forest, which will be ready for logging at the beginning of the 21st century, the paper said.

It also said an efficient, integrated system covering the processes from logging to marketing should be established for nationally and privately owned forests. At the same time, the paper called for an increase in forestry production efficiency and an improvement in working conditions for industry workers through mechanization.

North Korea

TV Report Examines Nuclear Power Industry

SK1504043192 Pyongyang Korean Central Television Network in Korean 1032 GMT 12 Apr 92

[Report: "Atomic Power Industrial Base Constructed Independently in Our Country"]

[Text] [Announcer] The nuclear industry is a domain with great significance, especially for the future, in satisfactorily resolving the daily increasing demand for energy according to the national economy's development.

The base of the chuche-type nuclear energy industry, which was built in our country under the wise leadership of the great leader and our party, is a foundation of nuclear energy that guarantees the development of the self-reliant national economy and is a brilliant creation inspiring great confidence.

Before we tour the nuclear research base and facilities in various units, which were built for the first time in our country, we had a brief interview with Comrade Yi Yong-ha, deputy director of the Bureau of Scientific Guidance, the Ministry of Nuclear Industry.

[Reporter] We would like to hear from you about the background of the base of the self-reliant nuclear industry and how it was realized in our country.

[Yi Yong-ha] As everyone knows, no one can imagine the development of modern industry without a reliable energy base. Foreseeing the distant future of the nation's economic development, the great leader formed a profound plan for developing nuclear energy and for using it as energy and saw to it that the scientific research work on this energy was carried out systematically.

At party congresses and various meetings, the great leader elucidated a clear guideline that emphasized that our nation's nuclear industry should be established only for peaceful purposes and be pushed forward and developed on the chuche-oriented principle and by focusing our efforts on resolving the energy problem.

Under the past condition in which there were no (?competent) scientists or technicians in the atomic energy sector, we made the first start. However, we selected the steps for establishing the nuclear energy industry exactly under the wise leadership of the great leader and the

party. We began the work of rearing scientists and technicians, as well as the work of establishing a research base. We pushed ahead with the exploration and development of mines to resolve the issue of nuclear raw materials by ourselves. We also implemented all issues, such as manufacturing uranium ore concentrate and nuclear fuel rods, selecting the type of nuclear reactor that corresponded to our realities, and designing and manufacturing such reactors, based on the chuche position and with our own strength.

As a result, we built as the first step a 5,000 kw test nuclear power station in the Yongbyon nuclear research base, and (?operated) it by infusing the nuclear fuel that we made by ourselves. Thus, we are operating it safely.

When you tour the site, you will actually realize the vitality of our party's policy for founding a self-reliant nuclear industry base. I believe that you will also realize how great the might of our scientists, technicians, and the working class is.

[Announcer] Under the guidance of Comrade Hong Sung-ku, senior technician in the test nuclear power station, we toured the facilities in the power station. This power station is a 5,000 kw test nuclear power station completed in the early part of 1986 by scientists and technicians in the nuclear energy domain by depending on our self-reliant national economy.

According to Comrade Hong Sung-ku, the nuclear reactor in this power station is a natural uranium graphite deceleration and carbonic acid gas coolant-type nuclear reactor. He explained in detail that this reactor uses natural uranium, which is abundantly found in our country, as nuclear fuel, high-purity graphite as the deceleration element, and carbonic acid gas as its heat conductor [yolmae]. Thus, this nuclear reactor is the type corresponding to our nation's practical situation.

This is the central control room of the power station. This central control room oversees and monitors the overall technological status of the nuclear power station through various gauges and electronic calculators. This room operates and stops the nuclear reactor and watches scores of special and characteristic phenomena, including temperature, pressure, and the quantity of oil in the reactor. Thus, this room ensures normal operation with relevant power output.

This room has a protective measure to stop the nuclear reactor automatically in case any accident occurs in any part of the power station. The startup of the nuclear reactor and the course of maintaining and suspending normal power output are being controlled by a controller. The location of this controller is learned from this indicator.

This is a fuel changing instrument that was researched and designed by our scientists and technicians in the nuclear energy sector and was manufactured by the working class in Yongsong.

This machine, weighing 280 tons, carries out the work of removing damaged fuel rods or rods that have been used out of the nuclear reactor and for inserting new fuel rods, moving horizontally and vertically according to the set coordinates with a high degree of precision.

This is the system that checks the damaged fuel. This system regularly checks the condition of all the fuel rods in the nuclear reactor and automatically locates the damaged fuel rods. This turbine and generator, which the working class of the Taean Heavy Machinery Complex designed and manufactured, are the ones that produce the 5,000 kw of electricity.

These instruments check the degree of radioactive contamination. Because we have these protective systems that our scientists and technicians have researched, developed, manufactured, and installed, the personnel working in the nuclear power plant building are assured of safety from radioactive contamination.

While touring the processes and facilities of the nuclear power plant, we gratefully feel the high pride of having the chuche- educated intellectuals who have been brought up by the great leader and the dear comrade leader, our working class which is faithful to the party and the revolution, and the strong basis of self-reliant economy that have enabled the foundation of our nuclear energy industry today.

For a nuclear reactor to operate in a nuclear power plant, we must have nuclear fuel for it. This is the plant in the Yongbyon nuclear power research base producing nuclear fuel rods. This plant produces nuclear fuel rods from the uranium ore concentrate using chemical processes and metallurgic and mechanical processes. We interviewed Comrade Chong Chi-pu, chief engineer of this plant, on the nuclear fuel rod production processes.

[Chong Chi-pu] A self-reliant nuclear fuel industry is essential to the independent nature of the nuclear energy industry. One ton of natural uranium equals 20,000 tons of coal. There are many uranium mines in our country. In Pakchon district, we have a medium plant which produces uranium ore concentrate from the uranium ore excavated in Sunchon district. Then, based on the experience we have attained, we built a new uranium ore concentrate production base in Pyongsan district.

The ore concentrate plant built in Pyongsan district began its first-stage operation in the second half of 1990 following partial trial operations. We are producing nuclear fuel rods receiving all the uranium ore concentrate produced in the Pakchon and Pyongsan districts. As for the uranium production processes, high-grade uranium ore is selected from the ore that is excavated. After being powdered, (?acid is used as a solvent), and following (?the ion exchange) and sedimentation process, ore concentrate is produced. Our plant receives the ore concentrate thus produced and produces metal uranium following various processes, such as an acid treatment process, (?refining) process, metallurgic process, and heat treatment process. Only after we cover the

metal uranium with a (?shell) and go through the completion process, can we obtain the nuclear fuel rods for burning in the nuclear reactor.

[Announcer] After listening to the nuclear fuel production processes, we knew that because our nuclear energy industry has a strong chuche-oriented fuel base, it is assured of a safe and rapid development.

We also visited various research institutes in the Atomic Energy Research Base, which was built in the Yongbyon area. In the research institutes there were various research laboratories that carry out various research projects, including those on atomic reactor physics, atomic reactor engineering, nuclear fuel, and nuclear materials, the automation systems of the atomic reactor, and nuclear electronic equipment. Our scientists and technicians were conducting research there.

In hearty response to our party's policy on building the chuche- oriented atomic energy industry, the scientists and technicians were skillfully solving scientific and technological problems concerning the nuclear power industry. They are the people in charge of our nuclear power industry, which has prospects for rapid progress. How trustworthy they are and how proud their achievements are!

We also visited the Pyongyang Atomic Energy Research Institute to know how atomic energy is being used in the power industry and other industries, as well, in our country.

Comrade Yi Kwang-yong, director of the Science Department of the Atomic Energy Research Institute, said:

[Yi Kwang-yong] Our Atomic Energy Research Institute is a research base that studies not only nuclear physics but also how to widely apply achievements from research in atomic energy to various fields of the people's economy. During his report to the Fourth Congress of the Workers Party of Korea, the great leader Comrade Kim Il-song taught that radioactive isotopes and radioactive rays [pangsason] must be widely used in industrial fields, the rural economy, and various other fields of the people's economy. In response to this teaching by the great leader, our research institute produces radioactive isotopes and sends them to various fields of the people's economy. A variety of fields are using radioactive isotopes. For example, the chemical industry, the metallurgical industry, the mining industry, and the agricultural field use them in analyzing ores, resources, and soil, studying properties of materials, and treating seeds. In this way, our country's atomic energy industry is widely used for peaceful purposes, in other words, in developing the people's economy and promoting the people's welfare. We will more positively conduct research to utilize atomic energy in the people's economy, thus further contributing to developing the people's economy and promoting the people's welfare.

[Announcer] What we felt at all the atomic energy facilities and research bases that we visited was that our atomic energy industry is very self-reliant, that the research bases are strong, that a new generation of promising and reliable young scientists and technicians trained by our party are in charge, and that, as a result, prospects are very optimistic.

Truly, the construction of the first experimental atomic power station in our country is the proud result that our intellectuals and working class have brought about in creating the self-reliant nuclear power industry under the wise leadership of the great leader and the dear comrade leader. This also demonstrates the justness and vitality of our party's line and plan for building the chuche-oriented atomic energy industry.

Functionaries, scientists, technicians, and the working class at the nuclear energy industrial sector, with hearts filled with faith in victory and optimism, are vigorously accelerating the construction of a nuclear reactor with a high generating capacity. This is part of a plan to develop nuclear energy to meet the increasing demand for energy.

Ever since the test nuclear reactor was put into operation, a 50,000-kilowatt nuclear reactor for producing energy that we designed based on reactor engineering and thermal technology tests, tests on the safety of the control system, an examination of nuclear materials and equipment, and operational experience has been in an earnest stage of construction. It will be operating by the end of 1995.

They have also begun building another 200,000 kilowatt nuclear reactor of the same type for the generation of energy. It is expected to begin operating some time during 1996. Designing another reactor, far bigger than this in generating capacity, is under consideration.

When our party's chuche-oriented policy on building nuclear energy bases is completely implemented, nuclear energy bases using locally available fuels will be erected in various places. Based on this, our self-sufficient national economy will develop and demonstrate its might even more.

'Full Text' of Kim Il-song Birthday Speech

SK1504105392 Pyongyang KCNA in English 1010 GMT 15 Apr 92

["Speech of President Kim Il-song at Banquet Arranged by DPRK Government"—KCNA headline]

[Text] Pyongyang April 15 (KCNA)—The great leader Comrade Kim Il-song, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea [WPK] and president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, made the speech titled "Enhancing the Role of the Popular Masses Is the Guarantee for Victory in the Cause of Independence" at the banquet arranged by the DPRK Government on April 15 in celebration of his 80th birthday.

Follows the full text of the speech: Esteemed, distinguished guests from foreign countries, comrades and friends,

This banquet is honoured by the company of our close comrades in arms and intimate friends: Comrade Yang Shangkun, president of the People's Republic of China; His Royal Highness Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, head of state and president of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia; Comrade Kaysone Phomvihan, president of the Lao People's Democratic Republic; His Excellency Lansana Conte, president and head of state of the Republic of Guinea; His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, president of the Republic of Uganda; His Excellency Joseph Saidu Momoh, president of the Republic of Sierra Leone; His Excellency Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, president of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea; as well as the members of more than 420 delegations from over 130 countries.

Allow me to express my heartfelt thanks to you heads of state, high-ranking leaders of parties and governments, distinguished figures and friends from many countries of the world for your having taken the trouble of making long journeys and congratulating me on my birthday.

Allow me also to offer my thanks to the members of the congratulatory group of the National Democratic Front of South Korea, the congratulatory group of the Koreans in Japan, and all the congratulatory groups from China, the Russian Federation, Europe, the United States, Canada and other parts of the world for coming to congratulate me on my birthday and to send my warm greetings to all the people in South Korea and to all my overseas compatriots.

It seems only yesterday that I crossed the River Amnok, determined not to return home without liberating my country, but I am already 80 years old. As I greet my 80th birthday today, being congratulated by many comrades and friends like this, I cannot repress my surging emotions.

Ever since I took the path of revolution, I have lived under the loving care of my comrades and my fellow people. Throughout the whole period of the arduous revolutionary struggle, my comrades in the revolution and my people have loved me warmly, protected me and helped me with all their hearts. Whenever I was undergoing a trial, they inspired me with courage and confidence. I am very proud of the fact that I have enjoyed trust and love from such loyal revolutionary comrades and such fine people. I would like to take this memorable opportunity which is overflowing with beautiful feelings of revolutionary obligation and comradely love to express my warm gratitude to the veteran revolutionary comrades who have shared weal and woe with me all along the path of revolution, to the cadres who have grown up to be reliable leaders in the practical struggle, and to all the party members and all the people who are unfailingly loyal to the party and the revolution.

As I look back on my past, I can say, in short, that the 80 years of my life as a son of the people has been a life of struggle devoted for the people.

I embarked on the path of revolution with a determination to dedicate myself to the country and my fellow people, and ever since my love for the people has always been uppermost in my mind. Even in an almost hopeless situation when I had to eat in the wind and sleep in the open during the grim days of the anti-Japanese revolution, I braced up my fighting spirit at the thought of our suffering nation, and when I had to endure the cold and hunger by a campfire I took courage by picturing in my mind our happy people who would live in the liberated country.

With a belief that the popular masses, not an individual, are the makers of history, I have always linked my life with those of the masses and found the worth of my life and the key to victory in sharing life and death, good times and bad with the masses. I fought braving difficulties with the conviction that I would unfailingly emerge victorious if I fought believing in the people and relying on their strength. Our enemy was formidable and our struggle was arduous. When the country was liberated through the protracted and arduous struggle against imperialism, the whole country bubbled over with joy and delight. The people were full of hope for worthy creation and a happy future, but we were unexpectedly faced with the new misfortune of national division and had again to fight imperialist aggressive forces. The three-year- long fatherland liberation war against the imperialist invasion was a hard fight. Our struggle to reconstruct towns and villages on the ruins after the war and our efforts to build socialism were also difficult. But we were not afraid of an enemy from any quarter nor did we feel discouraged in face of any difficulties and trials. We were able to overcome all our trials and difficulties and win a brilliant victory by fighting with the conviction that nothing was impossible for us as long as we had the party and the popular masses who were solidly united behind the party.

Our chuche idea is the idea which reflects the desire of the masses, the makers of history, for independence and their interests. In the whole course of the revolution and construction we have been guided by the chuche idea and adhered strictly to the chuche stand and principle.

Meeting the desire of the motive force of history for independence by strengthening it and increasing its role is the guiding principle of the revolution and construction which embodies the chuche idea. Both in our struggle against imperialism and in our efforts to build socialism we have put our main efforts into strengthening the motive force and raising its role, and promoted all our work to transform nature and society to meet the requirements of the motive force. The line on effecting chuche in ideology, independence in politics, self-sufficiency in the economy and self-reliant defense as well as the general line of socialist construction on giving a strong impetus to the three revolutions—ideological, technical and cultural—while strengthening the people's power and continually raising its function and role embody our party's chuche-orientated guiding principle.

The society we have built is a society in which the party and the masses of people have been fused into single-hearted unity and constitute an independent motive force of the revolution and in which chuche has been firmly established in all fields of politics, the economy and culture; it is a socialism which is centred on the people and puts everything in their service. That is why our socialism advances confidently and steadfastly, displaying its advantages, in spite of the ceaseless anti-socialist manoeuvres by the imperialists and reactionaries and in the turbulently changing situation.

I can say that the chuche idea is a life-giving factor in the efforts of our party and our people to accomplish the chuche revolutionary cause. In the future, too, we must continue to advance under the banner of the chuche idea and consistently implement the guiding principles of chuche, holding fast to them. Then, we will be able to achieve the ultimate victory of our cause.

The unity and cohesion of the party and the popular masses achieved on the basis of the chuche idea through a long-drawn-out and arduous struggle is the core of the glorious revolutionary traditions of our party. Today, by inheriting the party's revolutionary traditions, our entire party membership and all the working people have become the strong motive force that will carry forward the revolution, closely united behind comrade Kim Chong-il and the Central Committee of the party. This is the basic guarantee for the ultimate victory of our revolution. This gives me great satisfaction, and I would like to say that this is the summary of my life of 80 years.

One thing that is on my mind today is that I have not met our nation's desire to live happily together in a reunified country. It is a great misfortune for our people to suffer national division unable to reunify their country still today when nearly half a century has passed since the country was liberated. To reunify the country is a long-cherished common desire of our nation as well as my own pledge to the nation.

The reunification of our country is, of course, affected a great deal by foreign forces. National division itself was forced by foreign forces, and these forces still remain the major obstacle to national reunification. We must reunify the country by believing always in our own nation and relying on the efforts of our own nation. There are still many obstacles in the way of national reunification but the prospects of reunification are becoming bright. The spirit of our nation which has long history and a time-honored cultural tradition is alive, and the motive force of reunification is growing stronger with each passing day through the tireless patriotic struggle of the compatriots in the North, South and abroad. All our countrymen must unite firmly and open the door to reunification, under the banner of great national unity and in the patriotic spirit of independence, the pride of our nation.

Present here now are many of my old comrades in arms, comrades and friends from many countries who can advance hand in hand on the front of struggle for their common cause. This gives our people great support and encouragement.

In the early years of our revolutionary activity we established unbreakable comradely ties with fraternal peoples and have fought shoulder to shoulder with one another against our common enemy. We never forget fraternal peoples and internationalist revolutionary comrades who assisted us in our revolution at the cost of their blood.

The destiny of our nation is closely linked with that of the world's people. Our people will be loyal not only to their own cause but also to the common cause of the people of the world; they will oppose national egoism and fulfill internationalist obligations.

Although imperialists and reactionaries are gloating noisily over the crumbling of socialism in some countries as if humanity's cause of independence had been completely foiled, history will inevitably develop along the road of independence to which the masses of people aspire. Exploitation and oppression which are contrary to man's intrinsic nature of independence are being rejected with the passage of time, and the aspirations and desire of the people to live freely and peacefully in an independent world are daily growing stronger.

Taking advantage of the disappearance of their military rival and the destruction of the balance of forces, the modern imperialists are scheming to maintain and extend the old order of domination and subjugation, pinning hope on their military superiority, but this is an anachronistic delusion. Deriving the feelings of superiority and satisfaction from ruling and oppressing others by violence is the self-manifestation of the aggressive nature and anti-popular spirit which are characteristic of the law of the jungle, and clinging to the outmoded views and methods will end in hastening self-destruction. Because of its long-accumulated self-contradictions, modern imperialism is not only rotting and ailing more and more, but is being rejected both by the people and the capitalist world, owing to its arrogance and arbitrariness expressed in its attempt to dominate the world. As the world is producing a vast amount of material wealth on the basis of rapidly-developing modern science and technology, and as international relations have become close in political, economic, cultural, and all other spheres, the globe is changing into a common environment for human existence. All this means that, contrary to the subjective will of imperialists and reactionaries, social and historical conditions for building a free and peaceful new world are maturing still further. We must view the present situation optimistically and continue to advance to the future.

Today the common task facing the progressive people of the world is to build an independent new world. By an independent world, I mean a world which is free from domination and subjugation between countries and nations and from aggression and war, in other words, a

new world where the international community has become democratic. When the whole world becomes independent, a broad avenue will be open not only to durable world peace, a full development of friendship and cooperation among peoples but also to complete independence for the peoples of all countries.

An independent new world can be built only by the joint efforts of the united people throughout the world. Unlike in the past when the monopoly of capital was limited to individual countries and capitalist powers were biting at one another, the monopoly of capital has now extended on an international scale and the imperialists are allied in their opposition to the people's cause of independence. Under this condition, strengthening solidarity among the progressive people is the major strategic task of the present times.

The people who have emerged on the arena of history as the masters of the world and the masters of their own destiny demand independence, peace and friendship, not subordination, war, and antagonism. Independence, peace, and friendship are the noble, common ideals of humanity and these serve as the basis for the unity of the world's people in their struggle for making the whole world independent.

The social and historical conditions and the situation of one country differ from those of another. However, if they base themselves on the noble, common ideals of mankind, the people in all countries are fully able to unite and become a great force capable of putting an end to the old world and creating an independent new world.

In ensuring the unity of the world's people, the responsibility and role of the progressive parties that represent the people's desire for independence in each country and their interests are very important. The progressive parties in different countries must unite on the basis of the principles of independence and internationalism, cooperate closely to chart a correct common strategy in order to cope with the changing situation and circumstances and encourage and lead the people dynamically towards the implementation of the cause of independence against imperialism.

When all the progressive parties and peoples struggle shoulder to shoulder in the same ranks with loyalty to and a firm belief in the cause of independence, they will frustrate all the maneuvers of reactionaries to reverse the trend of history and bring about a bright future of humanity.

It is the noblest morality and duty for a revolutionary to serve the people. Nothing is worthier and more glorious for him than devoting his whole life to the people. I wish to dedicate the rest of my life to the people's cause, being loved and trusted by the people.

Allow me to propose a toast to the victory of the common cause of the people for independence,

To the health of the heads of state and high-ranking party and government leaders from different countries,

To the health of my compatriots from South Korea and abroad, and to the health of other comrades and friends.

Politburo Members Meet Syrian Delegation

SK1504050292 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0445 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Pyongyang April 15 (KCNA)—Talks between the delegations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Syrian Arab Republic were held Tuesday [14 April] at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.

Present at the talks on the Korean side were Pak Songchol, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and vice-president, and officials concerned and on the Syrian side were the members of the delegation led by 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party of Syria.

At the talks the sides informed each other of the situation of their countries and exchanged views on a series of matters of common concern.

Army Units Praise Kim Il-song's New Title

SK1504110992 Pyongyang KCNA in English 1004 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Pyongyang April 15 (KCNA)—The entire people across the country extend highest glory and warmest congratulations to the great leader President Kim Il-song with deep respect and reverence for him, considering the conferment of the title of generalissimo of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on him as a great auspicious event and the greatest happiness of the nation.

Soldiers meetings were held at the units of the Korean People's Army [KPA] to which Chong Kyu-ham, Kim Ki-hak, O Se-ok and Kim Song-sik belong and other units.

The reporters and speakers at the meetings said that the conferment of the title of generalissimo on the great leader comrade Kim Il-song is a high honor and pride of all our people and officers and men of the People's Army who make revolution and struggle, holding the great leader, the great brilliant commander, in high esteem.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il-song embarked upon the road of the revolution in his early years, founded the immortal chuche idea and, on its basis, has consistently developed and enriched the military science of chuche the keynote of which is the military idea, military theory and military tactics, and thus solved in a unique way all the new military problems raised by our age and the Korean revolution, they noted.

They stressed that the respected leader Comrade Kim Il-song is the great military strategist and ever-victorious

iron-willed brilliant commander who defeated the two imperialisms in one generation by founding and leading the armed forces of chuche.

The reporters and speakers called for carrying through the outstanding line and policy of army building expounded by respected Generalissimo Kim Il-song and applying the military idea, theory and tactics of chuche to consistently strengthen and develop the People's Army.

Congratulatory letters or messages to Generalissimo Kim Il-song were read at the meetings.

New Construction Projects Completed

SK1304155692 Pyongyang KCNA in English
1532 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Pyongyang April 13 (KCNA)—Some ten objects have been completed or commissioned on April 12 on the threshold of the April holiday.

The construction of Tongil Street was completed in Pyongyang and the Pyongyang-Kaesong express highway opened to traffic. The Kujang-Hyangjang line was switched over to electric traction and opened to traffic.

The diode shop of the Pyongyang integrated circuit factory with the annual capacity of several million diodes, the Samsu and Sinhung mines, the stone-processing branch factory of the Sindok mine, the soegol pit of Changnim mine, the Undok pit of the August 10 mine, the pneumatic spinning shop of the Kaesong textile mill, the export shop of the Sinuiju footware factory, the injection-moulded boot shop of the Sunchon shoes factory, the Sunchon-Korean traditional drug factory and the Chisonggumsan joint venture company run by the Ministry of Mining Industry and the Nagano Prefectural Konghwa Company of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan for updating ore dressing equipment were commissioned.

Earlier, a general iron plate cutting ground of the Pukjung machinery complex was constructed [words indistinct].

South Korea

Libya Denies KAL Landing To Evacuate Nationals

SK1504025892 Seoul YONHAP in English
0242 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 15 (YONHAP)—The Korean Air (KAL) plane due in Tripoli on Wednesday to pick up 256 South Koreans was grounded in Saudi Arabia Wednesday because Libya had canceled landing permission, the Foreign Ministry said.

Flight KE 801 was to leave Jiddah in Saudi Arabia at 9:50 to arrive in Tripoli at 2 P.M. with permission from the United Nations Security Council.

"The Libyan Government has withheld landing permission for special planes from Korea, Bangladesh and Morocco," a Ministry spokesman said. "It is not clear, however, whether the step is part of Libya's retaliatory measures against the U.N. sanctions that take effect at 1 P.M. Wednesday (Korean time)."

Libya closed all travel and telecommunications links with the outside world for 24 hours Tuesday in mourning for victims of a U.S. air raid in 1986 that claimed 41 lives.

DLP Faction Fails To Decide on Candidate

SK1504032692 Seoul YONHAP in English
0207 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 15 (YONHAP)—Efforts by anti-Kim Yong-sam forces to find a single candidate to challenge the nomination for president of the ruling Democratic Liberal Party's [DLP] executive chairman appeared to have broken down Wednesday.

The so-called seven-man committee formed by leaders of the anti-Kim faction was to convene Wednesday afternoon in a last-minute effort to force one of the two leading candidates to give up for the interest of their group.

But DLP Co-Chairman Pak Tae-chun, leader of the Democratic Justice Party Faction, and Rep. Yi Chong-chan were preparing to run for the nomination in "free competition" at the May 19 national convention. Both refused to compromise for the sake of their original plan to push a single candidate in a crucial one-on-one meeting Tuesday afternoon.

At the meeting, Pak declared his intention to seek the nomination at the convention and asked Yi for his cooperation, sources said.

Yi made it clear, however, that he will contest the nomination independently, if necessary, because the will of the people, as reflected in the outcome of the March 24 general elections, was to see "a new political leader emerge."

Accordingly, Pak Tae-chun was expected to press for his presidential bid at Wednesday's meeting of the seven-man committee and seek a majority decision of the group to legitimatize his candidacy, the sources said.

Yi sought the support of Rep. Pak Chol-on, a former sports minister and one of President No Tae-u's in-laws, in a get-together Tuesday night, but sources say he failed to get a nod from Pak.

Rep. Yi Han-tong, another presidential aspirant from the anti-Kim faction, said he will also go ahead with his efforts to seek the nomination if both Pak and Yi Chong-chan were to go ahead with plans for their candidacies.

Among the seven members of the committee, Pak Chol-on, Rep. Sim Myong-po and Rep-elect Yang Chang-sik were said to be in favor of supporting Co-Chairman Pak, while Rep. Pak Chun-pyong was believed to be neutral.

The other members, of course, are Pak Tae-chun, Yi Chong-chan and Yi Han-tong themselves.

Pak Chol-on hinted Wednesday that he was withholding his support for Pak Tae-chun. Although the press had been reporting he supported co-chairman Pak's candidacy, this was untrue, he said.

He made the remark at a press conference called at a downtown hotel Wednesday morning to announce that he would not become a candidate for the nomnination himself.

"There have been reports that I came out in support of one particular person," Pak Chol-on said. "But it is not true. I am merely trying to find a candidate who can meet the wishes of the people and push him as a single candidate of the party."

Asked if he believed that President No Tae-u would remain neutral to the end, Pak said he expected so since the president had made public pledges many times.

Supporters of Kim Yong-sam, meanwhile, were reacting sharply against Pak Tae-chun's candidacy, describing the co-chairman's intention as "a scheme to topple Kim Yong-sam" and beginning to draw as many party representatives to their camp as possible.

Elsewhere, Choe Hyong-u, first minister of political affairs, visited Pak Tae-chun Tuesday night and discussed the possible factional strife that could result from Pak's candidacy, the sources said.

Choe, Kim Yong-sam's confidant, has requested Pak give up his plans to run for the nomination in the interest of the entire ruling party and for his support for the national convention, which he said should be held in an atmosphere of festivity rather than strife.

Pak Tae-chun Bid Creating 'Schism'

SK1504030892 Seoul THE KOREA TIMES in English 15 Apr 92 p 2

[By staff reporter Kim Song-pok]

[Text] Democratic Liberal Party [DLP] Co-chairman Pak Tae-chun began pedaling hard on his quest for the party's presidential candidacy, making the "power race" within the ruling party a crisscross.

Pak's belated announcement caught Executive Chairman Kim Yong-sam off guard as he defied Kim's adroit pressure to keep him away from running in the May 19 nomination convention.

But Pak's move showed signs of opening schism within his own camp of anti-Kim figures as Rep. Yi Chong-chan, who is also jockeying for the candidacy, remains firm on his position to enter the competition.

Notable is the view of some middle-of-the-roaders that Pak does not really intend to run but is trying to find an excuse to sidestep the demand by his own followers and quit the race.

Chairing a meeting of the seven-man council of anti-Kim figures who have high profiles in the DLP Monday, Pak broke his long silence and expressed his intention, "I will run if this council agrees to support me."

Lawmakers loyal to Pak, including Choe Chae-uk and Sim Myong-po, said that Pak's announcement means that he has already paved the way for competition.

At present, it is apparent that Pak has made up his mind to vie for the ticket to the presidential election, Choe said, adding, "The arrow has already left the bow."

Most of the largest Minjong faction headed by President No Tae-u prod Co-chairman Pak to enter the race in recognition that hesitation at this juncture will pull down the whole Minjong faction.

A close aide to Pak also explained, "We have no negative message from President No and another co-chairman Kim Chong-pil remains undecided."

He made the remarks in rebuttal of some assertions that No does not want Pak to run and that Kim Chong-pil has struck a deal with Kim Yong-sam.

Now, the question facing Pak is to persuade Reps. Yi Chong-chan and Yi Han-tong to quit the race to rally their support behind him.

Pak met the "two Yis" yesterday but Yi Chong-chan turned out to be recalcitrant. Rep. Yi Han-tong made it clear that if Yi Chong-chan refuses to back Pak, he himself will not quit.

Before his talks with Pak, Yi Chong-chan told reporters, "To single out Co-chairman Pak does not comply with the people's desire shown in the general elections for a changing of the guard and settlement of regional antagonism."

Pak Chol-on, another member of the council of anti-Kim forces, strongly supports co-chairman Pak in an apparent scheme to make the most of his political gains in the post-Pak (co-chairman) days.

In the meantime, tensions are rising in the Kim Yong-sam camp at the news that Pak indicated his intention to run against Kim.

Kim's followers seemed somewhat embarrassed and are scrambling to find out whether co-chairman Pak really wants to run or will quit the race.

Despite a spate of questions from newsmen at his house, Executive Chairman Kim did not make any comments. Reps. Sin Kyong-sik and So Chong-won, aides to Executive Chairman Kim, watched their tongues, saying, "We were told to shut our mouths."

However, former DLP Secretary General Kim Yun—whan who leads a pro-YS [Kim Yong-sam] campaign registered his strong complaint about Co-chairman Pak's move, saying, "If Co-chairman Pak is running, Executive Chairman Kim will not even register his candidacy for the race."

Kim Yong-sam has strongly hoped that President No would intervene to discourage Co-chairman Pak into quitting the race.

Former Hyundai Chiefs Arrested for Tax Evasion

SK1504031592 Seoul YONHAP in English
0104 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 15 (YONHAP)—Two former presidents of Hyundai Merchant Marine Co. were arrested Tuesday [14 April] on charges of tax evasion and forgery.

Pak Se-yong and Song Yun-che, special aides to Unification National Party Executive Chairman Chong Chu-yong, are suspected of playing leading roles in dodging 5.8 billion won in taxes by creating a 21.1 billion-won "secret fund," according to the prosecution.

The prosecution will summon Chong Mong-hun, vice chairman of Hyundai Merchant, soon for questioning as the two strongly deny acting on his orders, a prosecution spokesman said Wednesday.

Song is accused of forging documents to falsely show that Hyundai Merchant had paid freight charges to foreign companies and of inflating freight charges by falsifying invoices and remittance telegrams from January 1897 to March 1988 while president of the company in a concerted effort to evade taxes.

Pak is accused of channeling corporate funds and secret funds out of the company while he was president of Hyundai Merchant from March 1988 to March 1992.

"They both said that low-ranking officials stored the secret money voluntarily for the company's sake and Vice Chairman Chong didn't give any orders about it," the spokesman said.

They claimed the secret money was used only to pay rebates to cargo owners to win new orders due to the overheated competition among local shipping companies and that none of the secret money was transferred to Chong, he said.

Economic Leaders Urge Restraint on Hyundai Issue

SK1404121192 Seoul YONHAP in English
0528 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 14 (YONHAP)—The heads of the nation's five major economic organizations called on both the government and the Hyundai Group Tuesday to exercise restraint in the discord that exists between them.

Yu Chang-sun, president of the Federation of Korean Industries, and his colleagues agreed that the escalating friction was no longer of any help to the economy, and decided to plead for moderation through informal channels lest an open attempt at mediation backfire.

The others are Kim Sang-ha, president of the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Pak Yong-hak, president of the Korean Foreign Traders Association; and Yi Tong-chan, president of the Council of Korea Employers Organizations.

The economic leaders also shared the view that environmental problems have become a major issue and they should take the lead in protecting the environment.

Security Officials Charged for Election Violations

SK1404121792 Seoul YONHAP in English
0810 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 14 (YONHAP)—The Seoul District Prosecutor's Office charged formally Tuesday four officials of the agency for National Security Planning (NSP) with violation of the National Assembly Election Law for their illegal campaigning in the March general elections.

It accused the four of distributing fliers and mailing letters slandering an opposition candidate in the Kangnam-a constituency three days before polling day.

The prosecution's investigation had focused on whether senior NSP officers had directed or taken part in the illegal campaigning but it made no progress as the agents were adamantly denying their involvements, the office said in an announcement.

The announcement said the prosecution would continue its probe into the case even after trials of Han Ki-yong, 37, and the others began. The National Assembly Election Law makes it a crime to slander a candidate for election.

Charges Against Vote Scandal Whistleblower Dropped

SK1404100592 Seoul YONHAP in English
0451 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 14 (YONHAP)—The Defense Ministry reported Tuesday that the Army 9th Division's military prosecution has dropped charges against 1st Lt. Yi Chi-mun, arrested after claiming there were irregularities in absentee balloting in his unit.

The ministry said Yi was instead referred to the division's disciplinary committee.

Days before the March 24 general elections, Yi told a news conference that some officers in his unit had influenced their men to vote for the ruling party.

The ministry later said an investigation had found Yi's allegation to be groundless although some officers had made remarks that were open to misunderstanding.

The ministry said that of the 19 cases of alleged absentee voting irregularities reported by political parties, social organizations and press media, it had investigated 16 and found most of them to be untrue.

Election law violation was found at an outfit of the signal command, as a result of which two company commanders and an enlisted man in charge of administrative affairs were arrested, it said.

Investigating a report that a signal command unit conducted voting by proxy for men away on temporary duty or on leave, it found that two company commanders and the enlisted man cast ballots after obtaining permission by telephone for servicemen posted to remote mountaintops to save them the trouble of traveling to and from the unit polling booth, the ministry said.

Defense Ministry Denies Plans To Buy AWACS

SK1504064292 Seoul YONHAP in English 0520 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 15 (OANA-YONHAP)—The Defense Ministry plans to introduce an airborne warning and control system (AWACS) in the first half of 1993, at the earliest, to improve South Korea's information-gathering capabilities, aviation industry sources said Wednesday.

The Ministry, however, denied having any such plan and said it would not purchase AWACS planes until 1995-96.

The Ministry, as part of its modernization of information- collection capabilities, was looking at the E-2C Hawkeye of Grumann, E3 AWACS of Boeing and C-130 improved model of Lockheed, the sources said.

The government had pushed ahead with the introduction of AWACS planes since 1985 and finished function tests after receiving materials from the three companies last year, the sources said.

Military Adjusts Civilian Control Line Northward

SK1404012592 Seoul THE KOREA TIMES in English 14 Apr 92 p 3

[Text] The military authorities will readjust the Civilian Control Line (CCL) in the Cholwon area northward this June to help develop the agrarian land laying fallow south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

Releasing the CCL readjustment plan, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said yesterday that people of 136 households at Tongmak-ri, Walha-ri and Kwanjon-ri in the Cholwon-kun would be placed south of the new line with an aggregate of 39,930,000 square meters of farmland to be developed.

A military source available said that the Joint Chiefs of Staff considered realigning the CCL three to five kilometers northward.

The military authorities explained that the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided to move the line northward, a little bit closer to the no-man's land, for the protection of the civilian property rights and expansion of the villagers' revenues, although a northward re-alignment of the line might risk military security and operational activities as well.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff said that it would also take a series of measures to ease the current regulations to control the civilians in and out of the CCL together with the readjustment scheme.

The military authorities plan to extend the time for the villagers to pass the line as long as possible, beginning in June.

People are obligated to enter the farmland across the CCL from half an hour before sunrise at the present time while they should trek out of the land north of the line before 30 minutes before sunset.

Under the new regulations those who want to visit their ancestral tombs located north of the CCL have only to produce their residence registration cards to the military guards posted on the line for their identification checks.

The military authorities adjusted the entire CCL northward in June 1989.

Assassin Denies U.S. Involvement in 1949 Murder

SK1504020892 Seoul YONHAP in English 0137 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 15 (YONHAP)—An Tu-hui, the assassin of Kim Ku, said Tuesday [14 April] that he acted on the basis of veiled suggestions and hints from four people.

On Sunday, An claimed he shot the independence leader in 1949 at the suggestion of Kim Chang-yong, an Army counter-intelligence chief.

In an interview with MBC Television, the 75-year-old bedridden assassin named the three others as Chang Taek-sang, No Tok-sul and Choe Un-chin. Chang was foreign minister, and No and Choe were police officers.

An denied the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), predecessor of the CIA, was linked with the assassination in any way.

"I said nothing about the alleged involvement of the OSS on Sunday. It was a story forced on me by my interrogator, Kwon Chung- wi," he said.

The TONG-A ILBO newspaper Monday quoted An as having told Kwon that he was approached by an OSS lt. colonel who strongly alluded to the need to get rid of Kim Ku.

Kim favored the establishment of a unified Korean government and opposed the creation of a separate government in the South. He earned the enmity of Syngman Rhee, who became Korea's first president, and his followers, who advocated and got a separate government.

In Tuesday evening's interview, An said nobody gave him an express order to kill Kim Ku.

"I shared with the four people the ideology of anti-communism and the philosophy of life. We all hated Kim Ku," he said.

An said he often heard the four complaining that "the Northwest Youth League to which An belonged excels in catching communists, but why doesn't it do anything

about Kim Ku" and "Kyongkyojang Kim Ku's residence is the power center, but the problem is that many communists lurk beneath it."

An said he took the remarks as an order to kill Kim, and on June 26, 1949, carried it out.

"On the day of the assassination, I felt bad because my wife had just had a miscarriage. I called on him at Kyongkyojang, and somehow we got into a quarrel and Kim Ku used unutterably bad words. I was enraged and fired my pistol at him," An said.

An was taken away by the military police and on the following day delivered to Kim Chang-yong's counter-intelligence unit, where he was held in the stockade but given exceptional treatment.

Upon the outbreak of the Korean war the following year, An was taken out of the Army prison by Kim and soon reinstated as an active officer.

Until last Sunday, An had tenaciously insisted the killing was totally his own work, denying anyone else's involvement.

Management, Labor Divided on New Wage Guidelines

SK1404021392 Seoul THE KOREA HERALD in English 14 Apr 92 p 8

[By staff reporter Kim Su-yong]

[Text] A rough sailing for wage negotiations is forecast for this year as management and labor are divided over the government's plan to introduce the so-called annual total wage system for the first time

Most firms generally appear to approve the new wage system under which wage increases are determined based on the total annual basic pay plus allowances.

Unlike the previous years, companies, especially large conglomerates, are reluctant to reveal their wage increase plans for negotiations in fear of possible backlash from labor.

The government placed in yesterday's evening newspaper an ad stressing the need for the adoption of the new wage system.

The ad published in the name of Deputy Prime Minister Choe Kak-kyu and three other economic ministers, said large businesses are urged to refrain from allowing too excessive wage hikes which the government says have led to higher commodity prices and caused a big disparity in wages between large and small firms.

About 1,400 firms, including large and state-invested companies, are asked to stick to the government's wage guideline that calls for curbing annual wage increase rates below 5 percent under the new wage system.

Any violators will face unscheduled tax probes and unfavorable treatment in granting loans, the government warned.

The government contended that large businesses have so far made public one-digit wage increases in an apparent bid to follow the government wage guideline, but have allowed additional raises in various allowances. The government also said that these allowances have played a key role in raising wages 20 percent annually on the average in the past three or four years.

The Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU), a nationwide labor organization, is on the verge of a head-on clash with the government, saying that the new wage system is designed to check wage hikes.

Early this year, the FKTU tentatively called for increasing the average worker's pay by 74,180 won to 568,732 won, up 15 percent. The pay is supposed to be raised by about 250,000 won to 820,711 won in consideration of rising living costs, but the demand is lowered in light of public call for labor and management to cooperate in tiding over current economic difficulties, especially Korea's dwindling international competitiveness.

With the arrival of the season for wage negotiations, attention is focused on Hyundai Business Group, which has drawn national attention when the Unification National Party led by Chong Chu-yong, the founder of the business group, made a strong showing in the March 24 parliamentary elections.

Chong's promise to raise his group's wages to 15 percent regardless of the government's guideline has reportedly infuriated the Labor Ministry.

A group spokesman strongly dismissed such an allegation as "unfounded," saying that wage hike rates are determined according to the outcome of wage negotiations between subsidiaries of the group and their unions."

In particular, Samsung Business Group, whose subsidiaries have no trade unions, has set the pace by announcing its wage hike plans first.

In the past, the group has followed the government's guideline to curb wage hike rates to one-digit level, but has jacked up wages by providing additional allowances.

Wage hike rates will be fixed in early next month which is later than in the previous years apparently because of the introduction of the new wage system, a group source said yesterday. Samsung Electronics Co., a flagship company of the business group, is reportedly considering introducing additional welfare policies such as providing life insurance policies to employees.

Other groups such as Daewoo and Lucky-Goldstar have not yet drawn up their plans for wage negotiations, said business sources, adding that they are watching developments in the labor circle.

Figures released by the government showed that 176 firms or 12.1 percent of the total 1,434 companies subject to

government control under the new wage system have concluded wage negotiations as of last Wednesday. Most of them are government-invested firms.

Fuel Prices Raised To Reduce Consumption

SK1404121392 Seoul YONHAP in English 0250 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 14 (YONHAP)—The government will raise gasoline and diesel prices more than 20 percent soon, perhaps as early as this week, officials at the Energy and Resources Ministry said Tuesday.

The increase was intended to reduce fuel consumption, which has grown more than 30 percent so far this year, the officials said.

The ministry would also put some 300 billion won into the Petroleum Project Fund, which is supposed to be used to compensate oil refineries for past deficits.

It reported the planned increase to the president at the weekend and will announce it this week, after consultation with the Economic Planning Board and other relevant government agencies.

Gasoline prices are expected to jump from 497 won a liter to around 600 won and diesel from 182 won to about 250 won, the officials said.

The government believes a major factor behind the sharp rise in oil consumption is the "excessively low" prices compared with Japan, Taiwan and some Western countries, they said.

The price of 497 won a liter for gasoline compares with 743 won in Japan, 745 won in France, 725 won in Germany and 532 won in Taiwan, according to the ministry.

For diesel, Korea's 182 won compares with 448 won in Japan, 456 won in Germany, 428 won in France and 380 won in Taiwan.

Since international crude oil prices are below the domestic base oil price of 16.9 U.S. dollars a barrel, oil refineries' increased revenue would be put into the petroleum project fund to offset the 300 billion won to be paid to them out of the fund.

The fund is used to maintain domestic oil prices at fixed levels by cushioning them from fluctuating international prices.

When the international price falls below the domestic base price, surplus income is collected in the fund, which pays the firms when they suffer deficits because the global price is above the domestic base price.

The planned increase would have little significant effect on inflation as gasoline and diesel are used chiefly as automobile fuels, the officials said.

Gasoline prices were liberalized last September, but government policy is to manage gasoline prices by setting an "internal price base" until liberalization is firmly rooted.

Textile Exports to Ex-Communists Up 75.3 Percent

SK1404121592 Seoul YONHAP in English 0618 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 14 (YONHAP)—Exports by South Korea's textile companies to a group of 10 nations that either used to be communist or still are communist rose 75.3 percent in the first two months of the year, the Korea Federation of Textile Industries [KFTI] said Tuesday.

Textile exports to the 10 countries totaled 109 million U.S. dollars for January and February, up 75.3 percent from the same months last year, KFTI said.

Shipments to nations in the Commonwealth of Independent States were up 221.2 percent at 27 million dollars. Exports to China increased 72.3 percent to 51 million dollars and shipments to Myanmar (Burma) rose 289.8 percent to 1 million dollars.

Exports to Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland were cut in half by rising protectionism and fierce competition. Declines ranged from 49 percent to 79 percent.

Trade Deficits With Ex-Communists Increasing

SK1504045092 Seoul THE KOREA TIMES in English 15 Apr 92 p 8

[Text] Korea is suffering from an increasing trade deficit with present and former socialist countries on top of its rising trade setbacks with capitalist countries.

Korea's overall trade with China and former socialist countries called "northern nations" is markedly expanding.

According to statistics from the Trade-Industry Ministry, Korea's trade with socialist and former socialist nations last year recorded $591 million in the red on a customs clearance basis.

Comparative trade setbacks were $299 million in 1989 and $158 million in 1990.

Korea enjoyed a $329 million trade surplus with the socialist world in 1988 when the government kicked off an intensive northern policy in order to expand economic and trade exchanges with socialist countries.

Korea's trade shortfalls with those countries in the past three years were exclusively attributed to its setbacks with China.

In particular, the trade deficit with China registered $1,070 million last year, compared with $313 million in 1988.

Present and former socialist countries covered by the statistics are the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the old Soviet Union, China, Eastern Europe, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Mongolia.

Korea's annual trade with the socialist world during the past four years increased 40 percent on the average, far surpassing a 15 percent rise in its global trade.

Specifically, its trade with the present and former socialist countries increased 75.7 percent in 1988 to $3.672 billion, 15 percent in 1989 to $4.223 billion, 33.1 percent in 1990 to $5.620 billion and 43.5 percent last year to $8.064 billion.

Of Korea's global trade, they accounted for 3.3 percent in 1988, 3.4 percent in 1989, 4.2 percent in 1990 and 5.3 percent last year.

The rapid expansion in trade with those nations is attributed to the exploration of its markets by private business circles after the end of the Cold War era in addition to the government's active northern policy.

Specifically, Korea's exports to the socialist world during the past four years rose 38 percent per year on the average against an 11 percent increase in its global shipments.

Its shipments to the socialist world rose 94.7 percent in 1988 to $2 billion but they decreased 2 percent in 1990 to $1.962 billion, after which they increased 39.2 percent to $2.731 billion in 1990 and 36.8 percent last year to $3.737 billion.

Those countries took a 5.2 percent share of Korea's global trade last year compared with 2.2 percent in 1987.

In the same period, Korea's yearly imports from them rose 42 percent on the average against an 18.7 percent increase in its global imports.

Its imports from the socialist world soared 57.2 percent in 1988 to $1.671 billion, 35.3 percent in 1989 to $2.261 billion, 27.8 percent in 1990 to $2.889 billion and 49.8 percent last year to $4.327 billion.

Last year, Korea's trade with China amounted to $5.812 billion with $2.371 billion in exports and $3.441 billion in imports, up 190 percent over 1987 and 52 percent from 1990.

Korea was the fourth largest exporter to China and its sixth biggest importer in the world.

Korea mainly exported electronics, textiles and petrochemicals to China, while importing agricultural and fisheries products, cement and other primary industrial goods from it.

Korea's trade with the former Soviet Union last year recorded $1.202 billion with exports worth $625 billion and imports worth $577 million, up 420 percent over 1988 and 35 percent from 1990.

Its trade with Eastern Europe reached $805 billion last year with $537 billion in exports and $268 million in imports, a 370 percent rise from 1988 and a 6.8 percent increase over 1990.

Its two-way trade with Vietnam last year increased 320 percent from 1988 and 60 percent over 1990 to $240 million with exports worth $199 million and imports worth $41 million.

The ministry said that the exploration of those countries' markets is rapidly reducing Korea's heavy dependence in exports on the United States, Japan, the 12-member European Community and other free countries.

Tops $591 Million in '91

	Trade With China, Former East Bloc			
		(Unit: $ million)		
Classification		Trade		
	'88	'89	'90	'91
Total	3,671	4,223	5,620	8,064
China	3,087	3,143	3,821	5,812
CIS	290	600	889	1,202
Eastern Europe	215	380	754	805
Yugoslavia	34	67	256	126
Poland	42	74	204	443
Hungary	32	68	113	123
Czechoslovakia	34	103	75	53
Romania	26	19	25	36
Bulgaria	10	29	38	24
Others	80	93	156	245.4
Vietnam	76	87	150	240
Mongolia	0.6	0.6	2.5	5.4

Tops $591 Million in '91

	Trade With China, Former East Bloc			
		(Unit: $ million)		
Classification		Exports		
	'88	'89	'90	'91
Total	2,000	1,962	2,731	3,737
China	1,700	1,438	1,553	2,371
CIS	112	208	519	625
Eastern Europe	126	271	541	537
Yugoslavia	17	47	214	103
Poland	27	56	113	290
Hungary	21	49	90	85
Czechoslovakia	23	79	52	21
Romania	3	0.3	22	26
Bulgaria	6	18	18	12
Others	63	46	118	204
Vietnam	62	45	117	199
Mongolia	-	0.1	0.5	5

Tops $591 Million in '91

Classification	Trade With China, Former East Bloc (Unit: $ million) Imports			
	'88	'89	'90	'91
Total	1,671	2,261	2,889	4,327
China	1,387	1,705	2,268	3,441
CIS	178	392	370	577
Eastern Europe	89	118	213	268
Yugoslavia	17	20	42	23
Poland	15	18	91	153
Hungary	11	19	23	38
Czechoslovakia	11	24	23	32
Romania	23	19	3	10
Bulgaria	4	11	21	12
Others	17	47	38	41.4
Vietnam	14	42	33	41
Mongolia	0.6	0.5	2	0.4

1988-91 Trade Statistics With PRC, East Europe

SK1504033892 Seoul YONHAP in English
0256 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 15 (YONHAP)—South Korea has run up a trade deficit of 719 million U.S. dollars on a customs clearance basis with former and current Communist countries over the last four years, the Trade and Industry Ministry reported Wednesday.

The nation had a surplus of 329 million dollars in 1988 and shortfalls of 299 million dollars in 1989, 158 million dollars in 1990 and 591 million dollars in 1991.

The deficit was led by surging imports of mining and agro-fishery products and low-priced consumer goods, according to the Ministry's analysis.

With China, Korea had a surplus of 313 million dollars in 1988 and a deficit of 267 million dollars in 1989. The shortfall grew to 715 million dollars in 1990 and 1.07 billion dollars in 1991, or 11.1 percent of Korea's external trade deficit.

In trade with Eastern Europe, the surplus was 37 million dollars in 1988, 153 million dollars in 1989, 328 million dollars in 1990 and 269 million dollars in 1991.

Trade with the former and current Communist nations amounted to 8.06 billion dollars last year, up from 3.67 billion dollars in 1988. Volume increased 40 percent annually in the four years to 5.3 percent of Korea's overall trade last year, up from 3.3 percent in 1988.

Exports swelled 38 percent a year from 2 billion dollars to 3.74 billion dollars in the period, while imports jumped 42 percent a year from 1.67 billion dollars to 4.33 billion dollars.

Main export items were electric and electronic appliances and textile goods, which comprised 35 percent of the shipments to the bloc, the Ministry said. As for imports, raw materials accounted for 80 percent.

Detention Center Planned To House Illegal Aliens

SK1304133792 Seoul YONHAP in English
0829 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 13 (YONHAP)—The government will set up a detention center to house illegal aliens in October, and will expand its monitoring of people arriving in the country to combat foreign criminals.

The center will be built in Hwigyong-tong, eastern Seoul, Kim Yu-hu, senior presidential secretary for audit and inspection, told a meeting of senior presidential secretaries presided over by President No Tae-u Monday.

Kim also said he would draw up a list of suspected Japanese gangsters so that the government could control their entry, monitor their stays in Korea and keep tabs on how much money they bring in.

The immigration control law would be amended to penalize job brokers who break the law, he said.

The number of foreigners convicted of commiting crimes by the Korean courts has risen 15.2 percent a year since 1986, he said.

The number of illegal stayers was counted at 61,691 as of the end of March, including 25,644 Chinese of Korean descent, 20,911 Filipinos, 5,214 Nepalese, 2,755 Bangladeshis and 815 Pakistanis.

It is estimated that 55,000 of them have jobs in violation of Korean immigration laws.

* Factors Affecting 1992 General Election

922C0120A Seoul HANGUK ILBO in Korean
2 Mar 92 p 3

[By reporters Yi Yu-sik, Chong Kwang-chol, and Yi Chae-yol: "Voter Turnout, Regional Antipathies 'the Biggest Hidden Factors'"]

[Text] What aspects will the general election for the 14th National Assembly take on as the campaign progresses? With five days left before the election is officially announced, both the ruling and opposition parties are all set to throw their campaign headquarters into full operation and get going. Factors that can seriously affect the final results are ubiquitous, leaving each camp unable to predict the outcome as yet, however. Most noteworthy of them all are the regional antipathies stirred up, directly or indirectly, by the leadership of each party at local

conventions and the voter turnout, which was unprecedentedly low in the recent local elections for provincial and large-city assemblies. Also posing a threat to the two-party image projected by the Democratic Liberal Party [DLP] and the Democratic Party [DP] are the Unification National Party [UNP]—which refuses to slow down its anti-DLP offensive, and the advances of other new parties and unaffiliated, pro-government candidates. As they are about to embark on their campaign, let us take a look at those factors making the election picture so complicated.

Voter Turnout:

Everyone seemingly agrees that the voter turnout is the biggest factor in determining the election outcome.

This observation is based on a general theory that the voter turnout reflects voters' political concerns and desires for change.

At the same time, it is a fact that the low turnout in the past elections—55% in the primary local assembly elections in March last year and 58.9% in the provincial and large-city assembly elections in June the same year—gave the DLP its overwhelming victories. The fact obviously reminds voters that a low turnout is a disadvantage to the opposition, heightening their concern.

The average voter turnout in the successive general elections in the past is 80%, while that in the seven elections of various types held in the past 10 years is 74%. Indeed, in view of the extraordinarily politics-oriented nature of our people, the low voter turnout in the local assembly elections was no doubt an accident.

In fact, the DP showed its observation that the low turnout was the biggest factor of its ignominious defeat in the local elections, and that abstentions were mostly by young voters in their twenties and thirties. The opposition party thinks that the key to victory in the upcoming election is to get those young voters—who account for 57% of all the eligible voters—to the polls and have them cast their ballots.

DP officials maintain that they may see the opposition wind prevailing again if only they succeed in bringing the voter turnout up to what it was at the time of the 13th National Assembly election (75%), with the cooperation of young voters who tend to lean toward the opposition. Interests in the local autonomy elections were confined to localities. In addition, candidates were relatively unknown to general voters, making it difficult to choose between them. It is different with a general election, however, in that political parties come out in real earnest and public concerns get relatively high. The manner in which these will affect the voter turnout in the upcoming election will be noteworthy.

On the other hand, DLP officials view the results of the local elections as reflecting the trends of our society toward individuality and individualism, plus the current political climate including the widespread distrust in politics. Based on this judgment, they expect that even with the urging by parties taken into account, the voter turnout will be approximately 70%, which is a little higher than in the provincial and large-city assembly elections.

This outlook is based on an observation that there has been little change in the situation since the local autonomy elections, with advances in democratization having eased the typical climate of government-opposition or "democracy vs. anti-democracy" confrontation, and with the two camps not showing any clear-cut policy difference or confronted with any unique political issues.

One thing is clear, however, and it is that the anticipated voter turnout is considerably lower than the 89.2% in the 13th presidential election or the 84.6% in the 12th general election, as a result of the momentum that a new party is gaining.

Youth, Women:

The voting trend of voters in their twenties and thirties—who account for 57% of the total population [as printed] and whose education levels and political consciousness are higher than other social strata—will be the "Achilles' heel" in the election. In addition, there are female voters accounting for 50.7% of the total population, forcing both the ruling and opposition camps to make special plans to woo their vote.

The opposition believes that a major factor of its defeat in the provincial and large-city assembly elections was the high abstention rates among young voters (reaching 70% in a DP estimate; 52% among voters in their twenties and 43% among those in their thirties in an estimate by the Home Affairs Ministry). The DP is racking its brains to bring the young voters around away from their apathy and distrust in politics.

At the same time, however, 49% of those who cast their ballots in the same elections were in their twenties and thirties and, from the results of the elections, it is believed that a fairly large number of them voted for DLP candidates. On the strength of this analysis, the DLP insists that a higher turnout of young voters alone would not lead to an "upset" in the upcoming election. Despite such wishful thinking, the DLP does not conceal its apprehensions that elections in the metropolitan districts, which promise to be a close contest, will be seriously affected by how many of those voters in their twenties and thirties will cast their ballots, and which way. Therefore, the DLP has already formed its youth vanguard like "21st Century University Students Alliance" and "Hanmaek Youth Association" and put them into 66 electoral districts including those in the metropolitan region. According to DLP Youth Bureau Director Chin Kyong-tae, "the equation of young voter equals anti-DLP is no longer valid. Their perception is changing."

At the same time, the DLP is doing its utmost to woo female votes which are by nature stability-oriented. Its strategy is to have local women's committees and other

grass-roots organizations under regional party chapters "work on homemakers" directly rather than campaigning through national organizations.

Meanwhile, the DP and other opposition parties would claim that their recent survey shows approximately 70% of voters in their twenties and thirties as supporting the opposition, and that if they succeed in bringing the turnout of those young voters to what it was at the time of the 13th general election, approximately 75%, they can easily win the targeted number of seats in the metropolitan districts. At the same time, with regard to women voters, they note triumphantly that they have launched various programs in the past four years to meet their interests in stability and win their trust.

Regional Antipathies:

A comprehensive look at the perception and strategy of each party indicates that the possibility is high of the upcoming election giving rise to regional antipathies again, or even magnifying them.

First of all, as for the DLP and DP, they are out for winning "a stable majority in the National Assembly" and securing "enough seats to block a constitutional amendment shifting to a parliamentary Cabinet system, respectively, and in order to reach their goals, it is absolutely necessary for them to "reestablish" control in their regions of influence. Therefore, it seems more or less inevitable that they will provoke regional antipathies directly or indirectly in the process.

In fact, the DLP and DP made it clear, almost openly, that they will turn the election into a "Honam vs. non-Honam" confrontation and a "TK vs. anti-TK" battle, respectively.

Considering the fact that both the ruling and opposition camps alike view the election as a virtual prelude to the upcoming presidential race, it is very likely that the campaigns will heat up unprecedentedly not only at party levels but also in regions related to the so-called runners for presidency.

With the presidential election approaching, realistically a potential presidential candidate is bound to suffer a fatal political blow should his citadel be violated in the National Assembly election.

In the Pusan-South Kyongsang region and the Honam regions, respectively, DLP's Kim Yong-sam and DP's Kim Tae-chung will campaign energetically for "final support" of their presidential bid.

Meanwhile, DLP co-chairman Kim Chong-pil is leading a movement to bring Chungchong provinces into the national spotlight, stressing the importance of the "role of the central zone." People view his activities in the same light as they do with the other two Kims.

In addition, UNP Chairman Chong Chu-yong, emerging into the arena as a new political force, has come up with a doctrine accusing the administration of "treating Kangwon Province coldly." He set up Kangwon as the key province in his campaign and has gone all-out to create the momentum for the UNP to gain enough seats to form a negotiating body of its own in the National Assembly. Thus, there are signs of regional confrontation growing more fractional and difficult to control.

New Party, Unaffiliated Candidates:

Also, how the new party will campaign under pressure from the DLP and DP is another major factor affecting the election. Since the UNP embraced a significantly large number of potential candidates who had failed to gain DLP endorsement in non-Honam districts except those in the metropolitan region, the DLP will have to compete with the UNP in many of those districts. On the other hand, in Honam districts, the UNP's showing remains just as poor as the DLP's.

Another factor one must not overlook is: Will the "Chong Chu-yong wind" really materialize in Kangwon Province, the "strategic" region targeted by the UNP? The DLP will likely be the "victim" should the UNP take it. Also noteworthy is how effectively new party candidates will campaign in Seoul and other metropolitan districts.

Important among factors involving the new party is how the uncommitted voters who are disillusioned with the existing parties will vote.

If voters led by workers and entrepreneurs in their thirties and forties generate a climate favoring the new party—as an alternative to the existing parties with which they are fed up—the UNP could be unexpectedly successful.

Even in this case, however, the possibility is just as high that UNP candidates will end up as runners-up across the board unless the uncommitted voters come out in force in their favor prevailing over the block votes for the DLP as well as the Honam and untamed votes for the DP.

Unaffiliated candidates who are coming out in force to run in the race constitute another factor to be reckoned with. Nationwide, there are more than 30 unaffiliated candidates with their firm constituencies, including Chong Ho-yong, former member of the National Assemblyman from Taegu West-A district. Their showing will likely have a significant impact on the overall outcome of the election. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that most of those unaffiliated candidates likely to be elected are pro-government.

Other Factors:

One must recognize that it is basically unlikely that some unforeseen factors would emerge suddenly to influence the general situation to any decisive extent.

The atmosphere is that both the ruling and opposition camps are cautious in the face of a strict enforcement of the election law. Another reason is that there is a tacit

agreement that if they should commit any improprieties to provoke law enforcement, it would spell "total disaster" for them.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that realistically both camps view the election as a crucial test for the December presidential race and are determined to "go all-out" to win. This greed for victory is spawning a multitude of risks and unforeseen factors everywhere.

While it is predictable that the contest will take on an aspect of severe regional confrontation, there is no guarantee against any "unexpected incident" occurring during, e.g., a party leader's stumping on behalf of candidates in hostile regions.

The confrontations such as Honam vs. non-Honam and TK vs. non-TK have set the stage for a sea of disinformation, leaving the situation vulnerable to some serious mishaps in the final phase of campaign.

At the same time, if either side should trigger a "megaton-class expose" with objective substantiations concerning political, social or economic issues, it could very well change the tide at once. Also, considering the fact that the election coincides with the resuming of school following vacation and the spring labor offensive, one cannot rule out the possibility of mass demonstrations, organized and launched in concert by students and workers, producing an impact on the election.

* Military Security Law Revision Ordered

* Revision of 'Evil Law' Welcomed

922C0121A Seoul TONG-A ILBO in Korean
25 Feb 92 p 2

[By reporter Kim Chae-hong]

[Text] The brakes have been applied to the "general application" of the Military Security Protection Law [MSPL], which since its enactment immediately after the 1972 proclamation of yusin system [Revitalizing Reform by then President Pak Chong-hui] has been criticized for its restrictive measures against the public's right to know and its support of efforts to turn the nation's military into a sanctuary.

The action came in the Constitution Court's "limited constitutionality" ruling on the law today, stating in effect that Articles 6, 7 and 10 of the MSPL—providing for penalties for acts of detecting, gathering or divulging military secrets—are liable to infringe on the basic rights of the people.

Declaring that "the prescribed scope of military secrets are so excessively broad it is detrimental to the freedom of learning, not to mention news coverage, with consequences rendering impossible legitimate criticism and oversight by the people, the court ruled that "the application of the law should be limited to a minimal level so as to ensure that the right to know of the people is applicable to as broad an area as possible."

Those provisions of the undemocratic evil law which were left in place all these years even after the collapse of yusin and Fifth Republic systems have thus practically lost their validity amid changes in reality, including the climate of rapprochement that has been created between North and South Korea.

Article 6 of the MSPL provides that "persons who have detected or gathered military secrets by unlawful means shall be sentenced to imprisonment with or without labor for 10 years or less," while Article 7 stipulates that "when those having detected or gathered military secrets divulge them to another person, they shall be sentenced to imprisonment with or without labor for one year or for a longer definite term." Meanwhile, Article 10 of the same law states that "when persons who happened to come to learn or possess military secrets divulge them to another person they shall be sentenced to imprisonment with or without labor for five years or less."

In issuing the ruling, the Constitution Court was acting on a request filed in June 1989 by the 28-member defense counsel led by Chang Ki-uk for two defendants, including Song Chong-tae (staff member for Rep. Yi Chol), who had been taken into custody and indicted on charges including MSPL violations. The ruling took two years and eight months.

The move of the defense, touched off by the action of the Agency for National Security Planning [ANSP] in arresting the two for passing secret military data to private research institutes, sought a ruling on two counts—one dealing with the MSPL and the other about the ANSP action.

At the time, explaining the defense's position, Chang Ki-uk stated: "The constitution provides that the prime minister, under the president, shall oversee all aspects of government. It is therefore unconstitutional for the ANSP, as an agency under the direct control of the president and not subject to the prime minister's oversight, to engage in acts of government including the exercise of investigative authority." The Seoul district criminal court then took cognizance of the case only for the portion dealing with the MSPL but not the one concerning the ANSP, referring it to the Constitution Court.

Consequently, the defense filed a separate petition with the Constitution Court against the ANSP action, which is still pending.

Meanwhile, in the view of legal experts, the MSPL is liable to unconstitutionality in many respects in addition to those that have been addressed in the ruling this time.

At the hearing on the case held on 30 May last year, Kim Il-su, professor of constitutional law at Korea University, stated: "The MSPL, couched in ambiguous terms

such as 'for national security reasons,' restricts excessively the freedom of expression and the people's right to know. Therefore, it is unconstitutional."

Prof. Kim emphasized that the MSPL should be revised into a law minimizing criminal punishment to a level deemed indispensable to protect military secrets.

Sin Tong-un, Seoul National University professor of criminal law, stressed at the same hearing that "Article 2 of this law, defining military secrets, extends over excessively broad areas and lacks the basic checks to guarantee the freedom of speech and press as well as the right to know. It infringes on the basic constitutional rights of free speech and is therefore unconstitutional."

In reference to paragraphs providing for punishment for persons accused of detecting or gathering military secrets "by unlawful means," Prof. Sin noted that those paragraphs make possible an interpretation that the MSPL is out to catch those who fail to follow procedures prescribed in enforcement regulations and other operating rules on security. This is tantamount to authorizing delegated legislation not based on provisions of law and is therefore unconstitutional.

Chang, the lawyer for the defendants, stated that the responsibility for protecting military secrets, as in cases involving other state secrets, rests with authorities dealing with them and there should be no attempt to impose it on the people in general or journalists.

He maintained that "while general criminal code provisions dealing with protection of state secrets precisely define the official responsibility of authorities in charge, the MSPL is aimed at the people in general." "Therefore, the general criminal code alone is sufficient," he stressed.

It is for this reason that the MSPL has been rapped as a "yusin evil law" utilized to turn the military into a sanctuary by discouraging approaches to or criticisms against the military by the general public, and by journalists in particular.

In short, the freedom of the press is banned on military personnel affairs involving general officers and this leads to a lack of openness which could be used as a means to protect "distortions in personnel management."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of National Defense [MND] prepared a revision plan to ease restrictions concerning military secrets in April 1989 but subsequently decided to await the judgment of the Constitution Court.

Now that the ruling has been issued, there should be a review of the basic structure of the outdated law by accepting scholars' opinions.

* Revision To Widen Access

922C0121B Seoul HANGUK ILBO in Korean 26 Feb 92 p 22

[By reporter Hong Yun-o: "An Affirmation That 'the Military Is Also an Object of Scrutiny and Criticism'—the Meaning of the Limited Constitutionality Ruling on the MSPL"]

[Text] The limited constitutionality ruling on the MSPL [Military Security Protection Law] issued by the Constitution Court, paving the way for a narrower interpretation and application of the controversial law and urging the MND [Ministry of National Defense] to revise it, is likely to more or less widen access to information about the military that have so far been treated—and protected—as a sanctuary.

The ruling, in substance, calls for minimizing the scope of the operative "military secret" so that the sphere open to the public's right to know can be expanded to the maximum. In other words, the court has ruled that the law be applied only to cases in which information legally classified as military secrets have been divulged and national security endangered clearly enough to warrant the application.

The ruling, however, upholds the "limited constitutionality" of the MSPL, although with the proviso that the application should be "only to cases in which...." Since it is not an overall approval of the gathering and disclosure of military information for news reporting and academic research, grounds for controversy still remains.

The MSPL, enacted immediately after the 1972 proclamation of yusin system and criticized ever since for curbing the right to know of the people and turning the military into a perpetual sanctuary, defines virtually everything about the military—policy, strategy, information, major personnel affairs, and communications—as military secret.

Moreover, this law stipulates in Article 6 that "persons who have detected or gathered military secrets by unlawful means shall be sentenced to imprisonment with or without labor for 10 years or less." Article 7 states that "when those who have detected or gathered military secrets divulge them to another person, they shall be sentenced to imprisonment with or without labor for one year or a longer definite term," while Article 10 provides that "when persons who happen to come to learn or possess military secrets divulge them to another person, they shall be sentenced to imprisonment with or without labor for five years or less."

This led to the arrest and indictment against Song Chong-tae, 35, a staff member for Rep. Yi Chol, and another person in June 1989. They were charged with MSPL violations for passing to chaeya [reformist] figures a "national defense operational report," a *secret* military document submitted to the National Assembly.

The defense counsel then filed a request for a ruling on MSPL's unconstitutionality.

The Seoul district criminal court took cognizance of the case and referred it to the Constitution Court in September the same year. A heated debate ensued for two years and five months, reaching the following conclusion: Five judges including Kim Yang-kyun concluded that the MSPL has limited constitutionality, Han Pyong-chae and two other judges viewed the law as constitutional and Judge Pyon Chong-su as unconstitutional. The announced "limited constitutionality" ruling was thus based on the majority view.

Stating in the text of the ruling that "the government is as apt to make mistakes as the average individual and general public, with extremely grave consequences," the Constitution Court declared: "The meaning of the freedom of expression constitutionally placed above the fundamental rights goes beyond guaranteeing the freedom of individuals. In allowing the people to criticize the ruler, it in effect enables the ruler and government to minimize their errors by taking the criticisms into consideration."

The Constitution Court concluded that the "military secret" protection should be limited to items that are not open to the public and relate to national security and clearly warrant the application of the MSPL, and that it should not be used by the government for its political interests or administrative convenience.

Judge Pyon Chong-su, who stood alone claiming unconstitutionality of the law, contended that "the military in a democratic state is the military of the people, by the people and for the people. It does not reign over the people." "Even things relating to the military," he noted, "should be disclosed to the people and subjected to public scrutiny and free, unbiased criticism as much as possible."

The Constitution Court ruling has enhanced the possibility that press reporting and gathering of data for research purposes on such things as major personnel changes involving general officers, location of military units—which is already known to most of the people—and on military policies will become somewhat free.

With information of these categories still bearing the "top secret," "secret," "classified" or "externally secret" classification, however, and with the Constitution Court ruling and interpreting as military secrets "items classified and marked, or officially announced, as military secrets through legal procedures," the nation is left with no realistic device to sort them out.

* Immediate Action Urged

922C0121C Seoul TONG-A ILBO in Korean
26 Feb 92 p 3

[Editorial: "The MSPL Should Be Revised Promptly"]

[Text] The MSPL, enacted in 1972 with the start of yusin system, has long been criticized for its restrictive measures against the right to know of the people. With regard to the "limited constitutionality" ruling by the Constitution Court on some provisions of this law, we cannot readily discard the feeling that it is the product of an agonizing legal and logical thinking as well as a desperate, last-ditch measure.

"Limited constitutionality" means that the provisions in question are unconstitutional if applied at their face value and as stated in the letter of the law. What the announced ruling means is that those who operate the MSPL [Military Security Protection Law]—a law unconstitutional in "form"—should operate it in a manner constitutional in "substance" by rising above literal interpretations faithful to the letter of the law, and by introducing logical interpretations giving due consideration to relationships between laws and teleological interpretations guided by the purpose of law and the supreme value of the order of law.

For instance, of Articles 6, 7 and 10 of the MSPL in question, Article 6 stipulates that "persons who have detected or gathered military secrets by unlawful means shall be sentenced to imprisonment with or without labor for 10 years or less." Article 2 of the same law, meanwhile, defines "military secrets" as items concerning military policy, military strategy, military diplomacy, operational plans of the military, military tactics, organization and equipment and mobilization of troops, military information, military transportation and communications, production and supply and research of military materials, personnel management of major military posts, and organization and equipment and mobilization of the Homeland Reserve Forces. In other words, persons who attempt to know anything about the military at all or who research, criticize or report about the military shall all be punished under this law. This means that the MSPL makes it impossible even to criticize any wrongdoing and irregularities committed by the military or propose corrective measures. In effect, it creates a sort of inviolable sanctuary within the state. The text of the Constitution Court ruling also notes this point.

It states: "Each nation designates, classifies and protects military information of certain categories as military secrets. Even advanced democracies are no exception but, quite naturally, there is a certain limit to it. If the scope of military secrets is excessively wide and creates a sanctuary forbidding criticism or oversight by the people, the disservice can become a problem. The curtain of protection can be used to cover up wrongdoing, irregularities and acts of evading responsibility." "The government, when in doubt, is apt to keep matters secret so as to ensure national security and, at the same time, to ward off the people's criticism and rebuke."

If so, the provisions of the law in question are clearly unconstitutional. There can be no question about it. What then motivated the Constitution Court to resort to as desperate a measure as "limited constitutionality"?

The reason is this: If the law in question should be repealed in its entirety, it would become impossible even to punish acts of detecting, gathering and divulging genuine military secrets—"materials not open to the public, namely, materials which are marked as military secrets through legal procedures and divulgence of which is regarded as clearly endangering national security." Also, the repeal would require the government to extend relief to those already punished. It would thus endanger national security, creating a potentially perilous climate.

When flaws in a law are not corrected by the government responsible for its execution, or by the National Assembly which made the law, it creates a situation leading to such a desperate measure as the limited-constitutionality ruling adopted by the Constitution Court. This applies not just to the MSPL. The same thing can be said about the Constitution Court ruling on the "acts encouraging, praising and benefiting the enemy" clause of the National Security Law.

Laws enacted as instruments to retain power or suppress civil rights, under the pretext of national security or public peace and order, should be corrected voluntarily by the government and the National Assembly in accordance with the basic constitutional principles without waiting for an action by the Constitution Court.

The administration and legislature must not delegate what they should do to the Constitution Court. If they do, there will be chaos in the state system and structure.

* Russian Scientists Invited for Research, Jobs

922C0110A Seoul HANGUK ILBO in Korean 7 Feb 92 p 1

[Text] Moscow (YONHAP)—With the effectuation of the ROK-Russian science and technology agreement, the ROK Government has decided to invite Russian scientists of advanced levels en masse to research jobs in Korea, effective this year.

The ROK Embassy in Moscow disclosed on 6 February that it had reached tentative agreement with the Russian Government on employing 110 Russian scientists this year to work on a variety of research programs at Korean institutes.

Those research institutes began signing contracts with individual scientists in December last year and, as a result, three of them are already in the country doing with their research and 12 others have completed the signing of contracts. Altogether, approximately 110 are expected to be working at Korean institutes by the end of the year.

Their research activities in South Korea will be in those fields where the former Soviet Union was known for maintaining high levels—i.e., electronics, machinery, applied physics, material engineering, special fibers, and aeronautics. The period of employment ranges from six months to one year, with the minimum being three months. They will be paid all their expenses in addition to the contracted compensations.

They will work at government-subsidized institutes including the Korea Institute of Machinery and Metals, the Institute of Aeronautics and Space, the Samsung Institute of Technology, and the Seoul National University research institutes.

At some 5,000 science and technology research institutes of the former Soviet Union, advanced-level scientists and engineers are facing threats of losing their jobs in the face of current reorganizations. As the drain of those scientists and engineers increases speed, Russian authorities are desperately trying to keep them, particularly those in advanced fields of high strategic values, such as nuclear science and space engineering, from leaving the country.

OECD on Drain of Scientists

922C0110A Seoul HANGUK ILBO in Korean 7 Feb 92 p 1

[Text] Tokyo (YONHAP)—OECD plans to hold a ministerial session of its policy committee on science and technology on 10 March in Paris to discuss specific measures to prevent the drain of scientists and engineers of the former Soviet Union and East Europe from their countries, the Japanese newspaper YOMIURI SHIMBUN reported on 7 February.

The YOMIURI report, based on a comment by an informed source at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, adds that if the session is held as planned, the OECD will be the first international organization to officially consider the issue of scientists and engineers of the former Soviet Union and East Europe leaving their countries.

According to the report, the purpose of the OECD meeting—which will also be attended by representatives of Russia and seven East European countries as observers in addition to those of OECD member countries—is to discuss specific plans, likely to be presented by European nations, focusing on the creation of a support fund for those scientists and engineers and on promoting joint research activities and other exchanges between them and OECD countries.

Burma

Muslim Rebels To Increase Anti-Rangoon Offensive

BK1504015392 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 15 Apr 92 p 8

[Text] The All Burma Muslim Union (ABMU) is to exchange armed personnel with the pro-democracy Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front (ARIF) to beef up their offensive against Rangoon.

ABMU leader Abdul Razzak, whose rebels operate near the Thai border, said he reached an agreement with ARIF leader Nurie Islam during a visit to the latter's headquarters in Arakan State near the border with Bangladesh.

The exchange will help provide experience and enhance cooperation. The agreement provides for the two groups to help each other fight the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), both on the battlefield and on the political front.

"We seek help from other countries for our people. And we will exchange our forces," Dr Razzak said.

Nearly 200,000 Rohingyas have massed near the Bangladesh-Burma border to escape the persecution and brutality of Burmese troops. Most have been helped by the UN and given shelter in 12 camps.

Muslims in southeastern Burma massing along the Thai-Burma border face similar treatement from SLORC. There are about 20,000 Muslim refugees in this part of Burma.

Karens Describe Battle for Manerplaw

BK1404123892 Hong Kong AFP in English 1219 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Bangkok, April 14 (AFP)—Hundreds of soldiers and porters have been killed in recent weeks as Burmese forces continued their campaign against ethnic Karen guerrillas, the guerrillas said in a statement Tuesday.

More than 20,000 Burmese troops are currently pressing a two-pronged attack in an attempt to capture the Karen headquarters at Manerplaw near the Thai border in eastern Burma, the statement said.

During March a total of 96 Burmese soldiers were killed and 174 wounded, while 49 Karen guerrillas were killed and 151 wounded in the fighting near Manerplaw, the Karen said.

The statement said that hundreds of porters, press-ganged by Burmese troops to carry ammunition and other supplies, were also believed to have been killed in the fighting.

Large-scale clashes were continuing in other areas, the statement said.

The guerrillas said that Karen civilians were being forced out of their villages in the hills of eastern Burma and relocated to lowlands away from the guerrillas' zone.

The Karens said Burmese troops were raping women, killing civilians and burning down villages.

The Karens have been fighting for greater autonomy since just after independence from Britain in 1948.

KNU Insurgents Said Forcefully Recruiting Youths

BK1504035292 Rangoon Radio Burma in Burmese 1330 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] KNU [Karen National Union] terrorist insurgents have been obstructing the prevalence of law and order and local peace and tranquility, and have been constantly engaged in destructive activities such as hindering construction projects undertaken by the state for development of indigenous national people, attacking and killing innocent indigenous people who wish to live in peace, conducting highway robberies, and burning down villages. Therefore, the Defense Services, hand in hand with the local people, have been crushing these KNU insurgents in order to protect the lives and property of the people and the interests of the state. As a result, the KNU insurgents are facing difficulties and running out of places to find shelter.

The KNU insurgents, whose manpower has been dwindling, have been forcefully recruiting youths between the ages of 13 and 18 from villages in order to replenish their strength.

At 2200 on 23 March, a unit from the KNU 2d Brigade came to Tawbyagyi village in Thandaung Township and took away 15 youths. At 0930 on 26 March, a unit from the Third Company of the KNU 2d Brigade arrived at the junction of Ngwetaungyi and Yonbyutaung Roads in Thaundaung Township and took away six youths from Thandit village who were hunting and cutting bamboo.

On 6 April, about 40 KNU insurgents arrived at Naungpadok village in Thaton Township and took away five youths. Another team of 15 Karen insurgents arrived in Htitamu Bayingyigon village in Thaton Township at about 2300 on 7 April and took away eight youths, and at midnight took away four youths from Htitamu Ywagyi village.

Another team of 30 KNU insurgents forcefully took away 31 youths from Minzi, Sabyusu, Gatesu, and Ahtet Ywa village tracts in Pa-an Township in order to replenish their strength. Two of the youths from Minzi village escaped under darkness from the insurgents and returned to their village.

Four of the youths who were forcibly taken away by the KNU insurgents at midnight on 7 April from Htitamu Ywagyi village were scheduled to be ordained as novices that their parents and relatives are in torment for their children. Previously, the KNU had only forcefully recruited unattached youths. However, the KNU, which is currently suffering from its dwindling manpower, is recruiting fathers who have two young children, as well as young monks, who were forcefully disrobed, in order to quickly replenish their strength.

Philippines

Red Scorpion Group Threatens U.S. Facilities

HK1504052392 Manila DIYARYO FILIPINO in Tagalog 15 Apr 92 p 1

[By P. Hernandez]

[Text] The Red Scorpion Group [RSG] has threatened to bomb facilities in the Philippines belonging to the U.S. and Israel to show their support for Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi who has defied United Nations' sanctions by refusing to turn over two men suspected of bombing a Pan Am airliner in 1989.

In an exclusive interview conducted over the telephone, RSG leader Alfredo de Leon, alias Comrade Benjie, said his group opposes the UN Security Council's decision to impose an arms and air embargo against Libya. He said the RSG would conduct commando attacks against U.S. and Israeli facilities once sanctions are imposed.

De Leon warned people to stay away from all U.S. and Israeli facilities so as not to get caught in any attack. He said Israel is also a target because it often sides with the U.S. in any moves against smaller states. He said Washington, which controls many UN Security Council members, is determined to harass Libya. Those members often follow the lead of the U.S.

Earlier, De Leon said that the RSG is in the process of establishing ties with various revolutionary movements around the world. He claims the RSG has set up an agency to carry out commando attacks to liquidate the judges who issued search warrants for the Michael Barnes rescue operation and also to retaliate against Philippine National Police officials and military men responsible for killing 14 men during the rescue of the American businessman.

Alleged 'Team Leader' Arrested

HK1304054092 Manila PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER in English 12 Apr 92 pp 1, 14

[By Dave Veridiano]

[Text] Police authorities announced yesterday the capture of one of the alleged team leaders of the Red Scorpion Group [RSG] who escaped from the Las Pinas house where American business executive Michael Barnes was rescued by members of Task Force Gemini.

At the same time, police officials insisted there was no rubout in the killing of 18 RSG members during the rescue operations launched last March 18 to free Barnes from his abductors.

Meanwhile, the promotion and the awarding of medals to Barnes' police rescuers were held in abeyance by the Department of Interior and Local Government [DILG].

Local Governments Secretary Cesar Sarino said they will have to wait until a final evaluation is submitted by the Department of Justice on the National Bureau of Investigation [NBI] report alleging there was no shootout during the Barnes rescue attempt.

PNP [Philippine National Police] Deputy Director General Gerardo Flores identified the captured RSG team leader as Jaime Agrava alias Rene, Boboy and Rudy. Davila is also the RSG finance and logistics officer.

A police report said Agrava was arrested last Friday on Taft Avenue and Vito Cruz by police intelligence agents led by Superintendent Robert C. Delfin.

Under initial interrogation, Agrava told police he was watching television when his group sensed the presence of the police raiding team. While his companions guarding Barnes in the Las Pinas house scrambled for their firearms, Agrava said he ran toward the back of the house and escaped.

Agrava added that as he was making his escape he saw his companions exchange fire with the police raiders.

Reacting to the NBI report that there was a rubout during Barnes' rescue, Flores offered technical explanations that would put to question the NBI's autopsy findings.

Flores said the NBI findings that most of the slain suspects were found negative for powder burns could be because the bodies had been thoroughly cleaned by embalmers at the funeral parlor where the bodies were taken in preparation of burial.

"Even if the hands of the firer are tested negative for gun powder residue, there is still a possibility that he indeed fired a gun," Flores said.

Flores said factors such as wind velocity, direction of firing, humidity, type of firearm used, caliber and type of ammunition used could be contributory to these findings.

PNP Crime Laboratory experts said autopsy procedures, especially on victims of multiple gunshot wounds, require extensive dissections on the body leading to the multilation of the parts examined.

This procedure would make reexamination and answers to the common medico-legal questions on gunshot wounds doubly difficult.

Senior Superintendent Ernesto Jimenez, deputy chief of the PNP Crime Laboratory, said the re-examination of the bodies of the 14 slain RSG members by the NBI would be less reliable than the findings of the first autopsy.

"The first examination which has access to the whole untampered body, has more complete basis for conclusion than the examination of the remains of the previous autopsy," Jimenez said.

Agrava also admitted he was personally picked by Alfredo de Leon the alleged leader of the RSG group to be the team leader of the security detail assigned to guard Barnes. He named the other two members of his team as Lino and Bonnie.

Sarino, who was interviewed in Malacanang during a break in the Cabinet's annual "Lenten reflection," said the DILG had to withhold the promotion of the "courageous" policemen who participated in the six raids that led to the rescue of Barnes as a consequence of the submission of the NBI report.

The DILG, which has control over the Philippine National Police, also had to delay the awarding of the Medalya ng Kagitingan [Medal of Honor] to 38 members of Task Force Gemini, the police team which conducted the raids. He said the DILG will have to wait until the Department of Justice [DOJ] submits its final evaluation of both the NBI and PNP reports on the Barnes rescue.

Six NBI units were fielded to the six houses raided by the PNP to look for evidence and witnesses to throw light on the alleged shootout. The NBI also conducted paraffin tests and autopsied the slain RSG members.

Justice Secretary Eduardo Montenegro, in an interview yesterday, clarified that the DOJ will still have to evaluate the NBI report, compare it with the PNP report and summon the policemen involved in Barnes' rescue "to get their side."

Montenegro noted that the NBI did not get the testimony of Barnes which he considered the most important evidence.

The INQUIRER learned from NBI sources that the bureau had planned to send some of its men to the United States to interview Barnes but backtracked when they learned that the PNP had already sent its men to talk to Barnes. Montenegro said a DOJ prosecutor accompanied the PNP team.

Sarino said he had intended to hold the awarding ceremony for the police officers in Malacanang before Easter Sunday "but since this report came out, I guess its part of the Holy Week; penance muna kait [were paying penaco first]."

Sarino said Barnes' rescue was one of the PNP's "shining glories" and asked the public not to "take it away from us." He said the PNP's morale used to be so high specially after American media carried the story of the rescue but now with the NBI report, "parang hinila sa amin itong aming gintong karangalan [our golden award has become a source of suspincion]."

Marine Contingent To Join Cambodian Peace Force

HK1504055092 Manila MANILA BULLETIN in English 15 Apr 92 p 5

[Text] A 99-man Philippine Marines contingent is set to fly for Cambodia before the end of April to be part of the United Nations (UN) peace-keeping force in that war-torn country.

AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] chief of staff Gen. Lisandro Abadia disclosed that the Marine troops have volunteered for the foreign assignment and were chosen from among other volunteers based on their combat record.

The Marines have seen action in Mindanao and other communist-infested areas in the Philippines.

They will be given a daily allowance of $50 to be provided by the UN while their families will continue to receive their regular pay and allowance for the duration of their foreign assignment.

The UN had decided to maintain a peacekeeping force composed of soldiers from various countries as part of the peace process Cambodia is undergoing.

The Philippines earlier assigned a 50-man contingent to secure United Nations observers who are monitoring the process of disarming Iraq in fulfillment of a condition of withdrawal of foreign troops which defeated the Iraqi army last year.

Unlike the Cambodia group, Filipino soldiers posted in Iraq receive a daily allowance of $150 from the UN.

According to Abadia, the deployment of an all-marine force to Cambodia was a request from the United Nations. The Filipino Marines are expected to be assigned in coastal security tasks there.

The Marines will have a tour of duty of at least six to 12 months in Cambodia. They may be replaced by a new batch of Filipino soldiers if the UN decides to extend the deployment of soldiers in that country.

Japanese Firms To Invest in Electronics Project

HK1504051592 Manila PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER in English 15 Apr 92 p 17

[By Corrie S. Narisma]

[Text] A group of Japanese companies is undertaking a P80 million [Philippine peso] electronics project at the Gateway Business Park's special export processing zone in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Tokumi Electronics Industries Co., Yuasa Co. Ltd. and Toyo C. Ltd. have formed a local subsidiary, Tokumi Electronics Philippines Inc. (TEPI), to oversee the venture.

The project will involve the manufacturing of headphone assemblies, speakers and microphones. It has been approved by the Export Processing Zone Authority (EPZA) for registration.

Tepi intends to export its entire production to Japan, the project is expected to manufacture 7.4 million pieces of headphones, microphones and speakers.

The local subsidiary plans to complete the construction of its manufacturing plant on a 15,000 square meter lot at the Gateway Business Park by October this year. Commercial operations will start in January next year.

TEPI's project is expected to generate annual exports averaging $8.26 million, net foreign exchange earnings of $2.3 million and generate employment for 234 people.

Central Bank Announces Commercial Debt Reduction

HK1504052292 Manila PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER in English 15 Apr 92 p 7

[By Arleen Chipongian]

[Text] The new agreement with foreign creditor-banks will allow the Philippines to cut its outstanding commercial debt by 23 percent, Central Bank Governor Jose Cuisia Jr. said yesterday.

Cuisia said that the agreement would cover $4.34 billion of the country's outstanding debt to foreign commercial banks.

Latest data from the Central Bank showed that the country's commercial debt burden stood at $11.23 billion. The 23-percent net reduction to be effected by the financial package would translate to about $2.6 billion.

Cuisia noted that the $4.34-billion worth of debts covered by the new package would still increase as other banks transmit their offers to join before the expected closing of the agreement by end-April or early next month.

Of the $4.34 billion, Cuisia said that the debt buy-back component of the financial package would account for $1.26 billion; the temporary interest rate reduction bonds, $753.86 million; the principal collateralized interest reduction bonds, $1.84 billion, and the conversion bonds, $491.07 million.

The government is expected to receive fresh loans amounting to $122.76 million from the banks which opted for the conversion bonds, Cuisia said.

The conversion bonds are linked to new money from the banks wherein a bank would be allowed to convert $4 of its existing exposure into these bonds for every $1 of new loan it grants to the Philippines.

Cuisia said that the county's debt negotiating panel will leave for Washington next week to discuss the proposed purchase of U.S. Treasury zero-coupon bonds that would be used to back up or guarantee the Philippine bonds to be issued to the foreign banks.

The Washington trip would also include negotiations for the so-called enhancement money that the country would need to finance the debt buy-back operation under the new financial package.

The Philippines, however, would have to meet a number of requirements before it is given access to such enhancement funds. The country is planning to borrow about $400 million of these low-interest loans.

One requirement is the implementation of policy reforms tied to the $300-million economic integration loan from the World Bank, which will be the major source of the enhancement funds.

On top of the $300-million loan, the World Bank had said that it was willing to lend an additional $100 million specifically for the debt buy-back transaction.

Finance Chief Denies Agreement on Debt Repayment

HK1504074192 Quezon City ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation DZMM in Tagalog 0400 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao has denied reports claiming that there has been a signing of securitization [word in English as heard] of loans in New York. He said these reports are all baseless:

[Begin Estanislao recording in English] Well, that's the typical news reporting. Those are the facts that they used. Something is very wrong with all of these people. I am here in Manila. [Central Bank] Governor Cuisia is here in Manila. We have not signed anything, so how can anybody just go to the newspapers and proclaim to the rest of the world that we have signed? [end recording]

Meanwhile Estanislao clarified the issue on the country's debt over the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant [BNPP] which is included in the country's debt restructuring agreement:

[Begin Estanislao recording in English] Yes, the problem with all of these people is that they never go back to the records. In 1987, our secretary of justice declared that those are legal and binding. In 1989, they were declared as legal and binding, and in 1992, they were declared as legal and binding by our secretary of justice; three different ones. We have been asking them if they have any proof that anything is tainted, then come out. The only thing they are saying is that those loans are tainted. But until now, nobody has come out with any proof that they are tainted. [end recording]

In related news, President Aquino met with Finance Secretary Estanislao in Malacanang. Here is Vicky Robles with the details:

[Begin Robles recording] President Aquino met with Secretary Estanislao during which he briefed her on the processess and progress of the country's debt repayment. Meanwhile, Estanislao admitted to the media that Argentina obtained a better and lower interest rate on its debts than the Philippines. However, he insisted that

Central Bank Governor Cuisia got a better deal after negotiations, with respect to other aspects of securitization of debt bonds. Estanislao reiterated that reports claiming that he and Cuisia have signed the debt securitization agreement in a secret ceremony in the United States are not true. Estanislao said there could be no signing yet, because the terms of the securitization package are still being finalized. He stressed that the agreement entered into by the Philippines with the World Bank and IMF will be open to public scrutiny. The Anti-Foreign Debt Coalition has protested against the inclusion of the BNPP debt papers in the debt restructuring and securitization agreement. [end recording]

Drilon Views Bases Conversion, Other Issues

HK1504093392 Quezon City Radyo ng Bayan in Tagalog 0650 GMT 15 Apr 92

[News briefing and conference by Executive Secretary Franklin Drilon on the Bases Conversion Development Authority and other subjects—live at the Kalayaan Hall, Malacanang Palace, Manila, in English; monitored in progress; first three paragraphs are Drilon's news statement]

[Excerpts] [Drilon] On question 2: The president has decided to defer the appointment of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority [BCDA] chairman and members and allow the president-elect to nominate the men and women who will make up the board of directors. The president believes that a deferment is best under the circumstances, considering that we are less than a month away from the 11 May elections. Once the president-elect is confirmed, consultations will be conducted immediately as part of the work of the transition committee on the president-elect's choice of the men and women who will make up the BCDA board. This will assure continuity because those who will be appointed to the BCDA board will serve the full term allowed by the law. It must be noted that the chairman and two members of the BCDA board of directors will serve for a term of six years; three directors will serve four years, and the remaining three directors will serve two years.

President Aquino does not want to tie the president-elect's hands with her BCDA appointments if they are made now. It must be emphasized that the BCDA was formed to formulate long-term plans for the conversion of Subic Naval Base and to generate funds to implement such conversion plans, through, among other things, the sale of government lands. Such sales can only take place after the president approves a detailed development plan. Thus, no real prejudice is caused by the deferment of the BCDA board chairman and members appointments until a president-elect is proclaimed.

Section 3 of the law, which provides that the BCDA shall be organized within 30 days after approval of the law, is merely directory, and will not invalidate appointments made beyond the stated period. [passage omitted]

Question 4: Whatever the religious leaders suggestions or dictates, it is our firm belief that the majority of Filipino people will vote in the election according to their consciences. Thus, this matter should not affect the election result that much.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Drilon] We believe that ultimately the Filipinos will vote according to their consciences. As long as there is no coercion on the part of anyone.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Drilon] That is your own conclusion, not ours.

[Reporter] What about the (interpretation) of the IMF?

[Drilon] Well, we have already stated the answer earlier.

[Reporter] Sir, what did you mean that Section 3 is just a directory?

[Drilon] Section 3 of the law provides that this BCDA shall be organized within 30 days after approval of the law. Even if the law uses the word shall, there is enough authority to support the view that this is not mandatory but merely directory, so that the failure to organize the BCDA through the appointment of the board of directors members will not invalidate the appointments made after 30 days.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Drilon] Nothing will happen because the law has been enacted, and it is the obligation of whoever is elected president to implement the law.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Drilon] We have already stated the reasons.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Drilon] Well, even if the president made the appointment a month ago, the term of office is six years for the chairman and, therefore, it will, by simple arithmetic, go beyond the term of her office.

[Reporter] Then, why did you appoint [Olongapo City Mayor] Gordon?

[Drilon] We did not appoint Gordon. Gordon was appointed by the law.

[Reporter] What if he is not elected in the coming May?

[Drilon] Well, if he is not elected in the forthcoming election, then the elected mayor will assume the post, because the law says, it has to be the Olongapo mayor.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Drilon] Well, she is saying it now.

[Reporter] Why only now?

[Drilon] What is wrong with saying it now? [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Do you have any other announcements?

[Drilon] The president also directed today Secretary Jesus Estanislao to suspend all preparations for the sale of the duty free shops. The president has directed Secretary Estanislao that any such decision should be made by the next administration.

[Reporter] What about the other public station program or the other companies who are....

[Drilon, interrupting] In so far as the [word indistinct] is concerned, the GSIS [Government Service Insurance System] board of directors, in fact, has also deferred this sale and I thought that you could use this for your holidays, this news. [laughter]

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Drilon] Because of so many questions raised in the media by interested parties, the president decided to just let the next administration decide on that. But this government's privatization program will still proceed. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Sir, has the debt agreement been signed in New York?

[Drilon] No agreement has been signed.

[Reporter] When will it be signed?

[Drilon] I am not in a position to answer that. The finance people are in the best position to answer that. [passage omitted]

NPA Said Collecting Large Sums From Candidates

HK1504030092 Manila Far East Broadcasting Company in Tagalog 0100 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] The New People's Army [NPA] has been collecting large sums from candidates running in the May election in exchange for safe-conduct passes. A member of the NPA arrested by Philippine National Police troops led by Major Benjie Bellarmino, chief of the 234th Mobile Force Company based in Catanauan, Quezon Province, reported this. The NPA man, Daniel (Anego), alias Comrade Edwin, said the latest contributor to the rebel organization was a certain Arturo Panganiban, a mayoral candidate in San Francisco, Quezon. Panganiban reportedly contributed 10,000 Philippine pesos in exchange for a safe-conduct pass so he could enter freely and campaign in the remote barangays of that town. It has been reported that the NPA rebels are helping ensure the victory of those candidates who have paid.

Report Views Mindanao Clans' Private Armies

HK1304030392 Manila THE CHRONICLE in English 13 Apr 92 pp 1, 6

[By Manuel Silva and Booma Cruz]

[Text] At least 17 political clans in six provinces in Mindanao maintain private armies who harass, intimidate and kill, a joint-report released yesterday by the police, military and the Commission on Elections [Comelec] said.

These families, composed of congressmen, governors and mayors, are in Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Basilan, Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat and Lanao del Sur, all of which have been put under Comelec control since last week.

Comelec sources said the crime syndicates hired by these families are composed of former military and police personnel and members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

They are part of the existing 78 private armies the Comelec ordered to be disbanded and disarmed before April 30. Sources described them as the "most unproductive" groups that thrive on smuggling and killings to carn their living.

These armed men are difficult to disband since they have their own bailiwicks, and not confined in certain camps or training centers, Comelec Chairman Christian Monsod said. He added, however, that they could be neutralized.

The families can mobilize up to 200 armed men and have guns and ammunition "more sophisticated" than those of the Armed Forces of the Philippines [AFP], the report said.

It added that they have the "potential to create disorder before, during and after the elections." It stressed, however, that these families have a "balance of power" among themselves.

"Others, the most powerful will lord it over the others [as published]," sources said.

Sources said the situation in Lanao del Sur has calmed down. However, politicians in other provinces continued to maintain private armies.

"It's a part of their culture," sources said, referring to the hiring of armed syndicates by political families. And this is the reason Sulu has been put under Comelec control. It's a powderkeg of the south, they added.

Monsod said a battalion of soldiers had been deployed to the six provinces, and that there might be additional troops. This will be taken up during the final command conference of the Comelec, police and military officials on April 24.

Also to be taken up is the extent of AFP's involvement in keeping peace and order in Mindanao. The "relationships" between the military and the police will also be reversed in Lanao del Sur, Sulu and Tawi-tawi.

This means that the PNP [Philippine National Police] will play second fiddle to the armed forces in these areas to keep some policemen from "Political partisanship."

Sources said that aside from having high-powered firearms, the political families have sophisticated pumpboats [motorized boats] and kumpits [fast boats] being used in their smuggling activities.

But in the long run, sources said, these families couldn't match the forces of the military. The military is planning to use its air force facilities in Mindanao which is an island area, they added.

The commission has taken steps to keep the elections peaceful. One approach was to bring politicians to a "peacepact" wherein they agree to support an honest and orderly election such as the one signed in Tagaytay City early this month. Commissioner Haydee Yorac said she should work for a similar pact among these families in Mindanao.

Thailand

Asa Downplays SRV Remarks on New Government

BK1504084792 Bangkok Radio Thailand Network in Thai 0530 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Interview with Foreign Minister Asa Sarasin by unidentified reporters on government formation—place and date not given; recorded]

[Text] [Asa] The cabinet formation should be made quickly so that it reflects the true image of our country. After the election, we will have elected MP's holding positions. The process of the five parties forming into a coalition and inviting General Suchinda as leader, all this is in keeping with democratic principles. I therefore would like to see the next step taken quickly, that is, the cabinet appointments.

[Unidentified reporter] About the comment by Vietnam's press?

[Asa] We should not put too much emphasis on that. Anyone can make comments, and it is impossible to expect everyone to approve of us. They have their freedom of thought and we also have ours. The press in Thailand enjoys much greater freedom than anyone in the world.

[Unidentified reporter] Wouldn't such criticism made on an international level be negative to Thailand's administration or relations with other countries?

[Asa] No, I don't think so. But I think the sooner we could form a government, the better it is for Thailand. Anyway, we are already in the process of forming a cabinet now.

Japanese Investment Not To Recover Soon

BK1304033892 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 13 Apr 92 p 13

[Text] Japanese investment and trade in Thailand cannot be expected to recover within a year because of economic difficulties in Japan which will affect overseas operations.

In the worst case scenario, badly-hit small-scale operations may be put up for sale.

In an interview with BUSINESS POST, Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) president Shiro Mizutani said the economic slowdown in Japan may effect Japanese performance in Thailand, both in terms of trade and investment.

Growth in trade and investment in the next few years could not be expected to be as high as in past years, he said.

The steep fall in the Tokyo stock market had blocked the extension of loans by Japanese financial institutes to new investment projects, particularly those overseas.

And banks had to limit their lending in line with the international framework, the Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

Mr Mizutani said it might be possible for banks to review loans they had extended to some investment projects regarded as unhealthy. In this case, some small-scale investment projects may be placed in a difficult situation.

But this would depend on the internal conditions of each project and the project developer.

"In general, I don't think Japanese businessmen will sell their firms to draw back their money. I am confident that they can bear the short-term loss during the recession as the majority of lending credit is medium and long term. However, it depends on the individual situation," Mr Mizutani said.

Trade volume between Thailand and Japan also would be effected as people would spend their moneys prudently during a recession period.

Mr Mizutani said imports of luxury goods would decline while imports of food and agricultural products should remain at the same level.

The plunge on the Tokyo stock market in the past two weeks indicated economic recession in Japan, which would indirectly affect the global economy and the Thai stock market.

Despite the Japanese Government's interest rate cut of 1.5 percent, the Nikkei index continued to fall.

"The confidence of Japanese investors is falling and I think it should take one to one and a half years for the Japanese economy to reach a completely normal situation," he said.

This meant it might take some time for Thai-Japanese trade and investment volumes to reach the same level as in the past three or four years.

But Mr Mizutani said it might be too early to forecast the future because the economic situation in Japan had changed rapidly in a short period. It would be better to wait and see what the situation was in at least a month.

The trade deficit of Thailand against Japan in 1991 was lower than in previous years. The growth rate of exports from Thailand to Japan was about 30 percent, compared with 1990, while imports from Japan to Thailand rose just 3-4 percent.

Mr Mizutani said the main reason was the launch of value-added tax (VAT) and the fact that Thailand's industrial boom had passed so demand for capital goods and machinery had dropped.

On the business climate in Thailand following the general election, Mr Mizutani said the most important factor for businessmen was political and economic stability. He said any immediate change in policy, whether good or bad, would not be welcomed.

Country To Join Negotiations on Marine Products

BK1304034892 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 13 Apr 92 p 13

[Text] Thailand will join ASEAN in negotiations with Italy and the European Community for the European side to accept more marine products from ASEAN countries, according to Thai counsellor in Italy, Wanrop Israngkun na Ayudhya.

Mr Wanrop said at present Thai marine products exported to Italy continued to face non-tariff barriers.

He said Italy imposed stringent controls on marine products from Thailand.

Under such controls, he said, Italy would remove Thai exporters from the list if they were found to be exporting products which were below standard.

Italy at present accepted only a few exporters, he said.

Before accepting companies' products Italy sent officials to check hygiene and quality. If satisfied with the results, they would certify the products.

The number of companies certified by Italy had not increased in recent times even though many Thai marine product companies had been established and were of high quality.

Thailand would join ASEAN in negotiating with Italy and the EC because when the EC became a single market its policies would affect not only Thailand but the whole of ASEAN.

Mr Wanrop was optimistic that Thai marine exports would have brighter prospects once the EC became a single market.

He said Thailand exports 2,200 million baht worth of squid and 355 million baht worth of canned marine products to Italy last year.

GATT Offered Further Reduction on Tariffs

BK1504015192 Bangkok THE NATION in English 15 Apr 92 p B1

[by Atchara Phongwuthitham]

[Text] Thailand has offered to further bring down import tariffs on agricultural and manufactured goods from an average 34.8 percent to 26.07 percent in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade talks.

Sukhon Kanchanalai, director-general of the Business Economics Department, said the country's revised package which comprised 997 agricultural and 3,234 industrial goods represents a tariff reduction of 21.68 percent. The tariff liberalization offer was handed to the group negotiating market access in Geneva late last month, she added.

The Thai offer, Sukhon said, should be substantial given the fact that the country has until now maintained relatively high tariffs, averaging at 34.8 percent. Moreover, Thailand's status as a significant trading nation has put pressure on the country to make an equally significant offer to liberalize its market through tariff negotiations. According to the latest Gatt report, Thailand ranked the world's 22d largest importer and the 28th largest exporter.

Its share in the world trade has doubled over the past seven years from 0.49 percent to 0.92 percent in 1991. Its share in the world's export rose from 0.41 percent to 0.80 percent. Similarly, its import jumped from 0.56 percent to 1.04 percent of the world's import.

"Our trade strength has led several countries to believe Thailand is no longer a small trading nation. We have to act to match this expectation," Sukhon said.

At present, some 30 countries participating in the Uruguay Round have already submitted their offers to open domestic merchandise markets. The United States and the European Community, two major economic superpowers, had been slow in turning in lists of proposed tariffs on industrial imports.

The Business Economics Department is currently evaluating the proposals on market access of Australia and New Zealand to see the benefits of the offers.

If Thailand is not satisfied with any of the offers, it might suggest that bilateral negotiations on market access be initiated, the official added.

Exporters Sever Ties With Company After Dispute

BK1504041792 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 15 Apr 92 p 17

[by Ratchaphon Laowanit]

[Text] A pool of major rice exporters has decided to sever its ties with Chaiyaphon Rice Co after its failure to settle a dispute over the controversial Iraqi rice deal.

Pool members Huai Chuan Rice, Capital Rice, Seng Thong Rice, Sun Hua Seng, Hong Yeah Seng, Siam Rice Trading, Puay Heng Long and Kit Pon also threatened that Chaiyapon Rice would take full responsibility if there was any loss.

The eight colleagues of Chaiyaphon Rice Co were unhappy with the dominance of Chaiyaphon Rice managing-director Phaibun Kuansongtham, who tried to push ahead with the deal after the pool called for suspension of the shipment because of uncertainty over whether the Iraqi Government would pay.

An informed source in the pool of rice exporters told BUSINESS POST they suspected Chaiyaphon was trying to distort the facts in an attempt to squeeze them out of the contract.

The controversial rice deal was initiated by Mr Phaibun, who negotiated with the Baghdad Government in the middle of last year to sell 645,000 tons of high-grade rice to that country. But the deal was deadlocked after the first 75,000-ton shipment was sent and further shipments were halted because of the Iraqi Government's financial difficulties.

Iraq could not open a letter of credit for the rice because major international commercial banks holding Iraqi assets had refused to free the funds.

Mr Phaibun had held several talks with Baghdad to seek a way around this and the latest proposal was that the Iraqi Government would buy only 170,000 tons of rice on a six-month credit term and its letter of credit would be opened from the Jordanian Housing Bank.

The Baghdad Government said it would pay in gold if it failed to convince international banks to release its assets.

But the remaining pool members feared the deal was too risky and wanted to suspend it until Iraq could improve payment conditions.

Mr Phaibun asked Bangkok Bank to support the rice delivery through financial support and it had chartered several vessels to load the rice despite objections from the pool members.

The source said the rice traders were worried that if Chaiyaphon Rice Co went ahead with the deal alone they would be left with huge losses as the Baghdad Government may refuse to pay the existing 1,700-million-baht debt for rice bought from them over the past two years.

"They tried to block Chaiyaphon Rice's shipments several times but it failed to convince Mr Phaibun and the Bangkok Bank," the source said.

Suchinda Said Unlikely To Have 'Real' Power

BK1504041592 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 15 Apr 92 p 3

[Text] Prime Minister Suchinda Khraprayun is unlikely to have any real power in government as the five coalition parties will decide most matters, Gen Sit Chirarot predicted yesterday.

Gen Sit, appointed by Gen Suchinda as chairman of the Assets Examination Committee after the coup in February 1991, said the delay in selecting the Cabinet was a good example of how Gen Suchinda had no authority.

When Gen Suchinda rejects people recommended by the parties and they in turn refuse to back down, then there is nothing which can be done," he said.

Gen Suchinda was an aide to Gen Sit when he served as interior minister in the Prem Tinsulanon administration.

"I am worried about Suchinda. I sympathise with him. I know he has problems and will meet more obstacles since becoming prime minister."

Gen Sit said the worrying thing was that Gen Suchinda did not belong in political circles, but had made the "supreme sacrifice" of accepting the premiership.

The opposition to an outsider as prime minister was a political matter and did not concern the person occupying the post, he said.

"I am worried about him as someone that I love and have always had confidence in. I don't want to see him sworn at," Gen Sit said.

Gen Suchinda will be able to take the political heat. "He is not a wavering person. He is very solid."

Gen Sit said he did not want to speculate on how long the Suchinda government would last.

He did not think Gen Suchinda had accepted the premiership because of pressure from his subordinates, but any who tried had done so for their own benefit by pushing him on and pulling him down at the same time.

Gen Sit said Gen Suchinda had said he did not want the post, but the situation had developed in such a way that none of the five coalition party leaders would take it.

Gen Suchinda had no choice but to accept the responsibility thrust on him by the five parties.

He refused to comment on the appointment of politcians to the Cabient found by his committee to be unusually

wealthy, saying simply he had been invited to help solve a problem for the country and had accepted.

"The National Peace-Keeping Council [NPKC] had absolute state power and as an ordinary citizen I could not refuse them when they asked me to serve," he said.

He did not expect problems in appointing unusually wealthy politicians to the Cabinet as this had not been a condition in his accepting the assets committee chair.

"I knew there would be problems with my work and there were. But I believed I was doing it for the country and I did the best I could."

The Assets Examination Committee came under heavy criticism from academics, politicians and the media for being a tool of the NPKC to discredit certain politicians in the last government while also clearing others.

Gen Sit said the only thing he could not tolerate was criticism that he had been unfair or dishonest in carrying out his duty.

He said there was some evidence the committee could not uncover and there were time limitations which stopped it from probing deeper.

"I am not disappointed with what we have done. A lot of people wrote supporting us. When I talk to people, they are satisfied with the work. No one was opposed."

Cabinet Assumes Duties This Month

BK1504014992 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 15 Apr 92 p 1

[Text] The new Cabinet will be ready to formally assume its duties this month, Prime Minister Suchinda Khrapayun said yesterday.

The five political parties led by Samakkhi Tham (STP) were told to forward their lists of Cabinet candidates for his consideration by tomorrow.

The team will be ready to assume official duties once the appointments are approved by His Majesty the King and they appear before His Majesty to be sworn in, Gen Suchinda said.

The whole process should be completed by the end of the month, said Gen Suchinda who defended the unusual delay in formation of the Cabinet.

The Prime Minister, talking to reporters at the Army Golf Club, insisted on his right to screen Cabinet nominees proposed to him by STP and its allies—Chat Thai, Social Action, Prachakon Thai and Ratsadon.

"I have given them a guideline. The parties will have freedom in selecting Cabinet members under their quotas, provided that the chosen persons are good and capable," Gen Suchinda said.

The Premier declined to comment when asked if he would accept the parties' Cabinet lists which include politicians declared unusually rich.

"I cannot say anything now. I'll have to see the lists first. Only then may I offer my observations (to the parties) if it is necessary," Gen Suchinda said, adding that he will listen to the reasons of political party leaders on the issue.

He noted, however, that he wanted the judicial system to prevail in this case. Unusually rich politicians, if made Cabinet ministers, will have to resign if found guilty in court.

He said that his Cabinet is expected to be able to present the government policy statement in Parliament within 10 days of its formation.

The caretaker government of Anan Panyarachun will take care of routine administrative work and solve immediate problems which are not policy matters during the transition period, Gen Suchinda said.

Gen Suchinda confirmed that there will be nine non-elected persons including himself in the next Cabinet.

He had already chosen persons to fill these positions and some have already accepted the posts.

The other eight persons include legal expert Michai Ruchuphan, Suthi Singsa-ne and Assistant Army Chief Chatchom Kanlong.

Mr Michai will be made deputy prime minister, Gen Suchinda said, adding that Mr Michai will be the only non-elected duputy prime minister to be appointed under his quota.

Mr Suthi will be made finance minister while Gen Chatchom will be appointed deputy defence minister, said Gen Suchinda, who said he himself will concurrently hold another position as defence minister.

He refused to confirm press speculation about other non-elected appointees.

Gen Suchinda insisted that he had no problem working with the politicians although the military had previously criticised some of them of being corrupt and not worth associating with.

"We have to accept that among the good there are always some bad people.

"Everybody will naturally want a good government. But we have to understand that we have political parties which come from an election and we know well who is in control of each of these political parties. We have to be realistic," Gen Suchinda said.

The Prime Minister said that he had no worries in running the Government. "I will do the best I can. But if I find myself incapable of doing the job, then I'll resign. I've never thought of having a long-lasting government, nor am I concerned that others will try to undermine it.

I only believe that if I perform well and people support it, then the Government will be able to stay," Gen Suchinda said.

He added that he has been searching for capable persons to join his team of economic advisers.

Problems of Sustaining Cabinet Seen

BK1504023192 Bangkok THE NATION in English 15 Apr 92 p A7

[Editorial: "Life of Suchinda Cabinet Promises To Be Short"]

[Text] The delays of the Suchinda coalition in forming a Cabinet are yet another indication that the political marriage of convenience between the military and the five parties in the coalition will be a rocky one. The union, far from being based on love or even common principles, was simply a creation of self-interest and lust for power.

For starters, not all the five parties were happy with the military's choice of Gen Suchinda Khraprayun as the new premier. Yet they were unable to come up with a more acceptable nominee than Samakkhi Tham party leader Narong Wongwan, whom the US suspected of involvement in drug trafficking. Now they have to live with Suchinda, who considered his stepping down from the posts of army chief and supreme commanders a "great personal sacrifice" to this country.

In return for this "sacrifice" Suchinda intends to hold the defence portfolio and reserve at least eight other ministerial posts—including the posts of finance minister, interior minister and commerce minister—for "outsiders" chosen by him and the military. This leaves 40 ministerial posts for the five parties to scramble over. (The Constitution authorizes a prime minister to set up a Cabinet of no more than 48 persons. Since Suchinda will concurrently be the premier and defence minister, he is not counted as one in the 48.)

For about one week after the royal appointment of Suchinda as premier last Tuesday, the five parties couldn't agree among themselves on how to divide the 40 seats. They didn't expect Suchinda and the military would demand control of the finance, the interior and the commerce ministries in addition to the defence ministry, which they were quite prepared to surrender to the military.

Eventually the five parties agreed on the following distribution: Samakkhi Tham (79 MPs)—16 Cabinet posts; Chat Thai (74 MPs)—15 Cabinet posts; Social Action (31 MPs)—6 Cabinet posts; Prachakon Thai (7 MPs)—2 Cabinet posts; and Ratsadon (4 MPs)—1 Cabinet post.

The two smallest parties in the coalition naturally had little bargaining power and had to settle for whatever they were given. The single Cabinet post for Ratsadon will be a deputy education minister's post, which will go to secretary-general Chaiphak Siriwat. The post is relatively insignificant, but it was enough to cause a serious rift between Chaiphak and his mentor, party leader Gen Mana Rattanakoset. Their quarrel was so serious that Mana, a former deputy premier and education minister, at one time threatened to dissolve the party. And even though he has dropped the idea, Mana has told Chaiphak to stop calling him "papa".

In Prachakon Thai, party leader Samak Suntharawet will be a deputy premier. The other Cabinet post is deputy agriculture minister, which will go to Warothai Phinyasat, whose team swept the three House seats in Chanthaburi. The unexpected election defeat of other senior Prachakon Thai executives in Bangkok kept them out of contention, at least for the time being.

Social Action seems to be in disarray since its initial bid for control of the commerce ministry was blocked by the military. Now party leader Montri Phongphanit will have to settle for a deputy premiership for himself plus the ministries of science and public health for his colleagues. His main concern now is to resist the military's attempt to make Lt Gen Khasem Kraisan, who resigned as secretary-general of the party last week, a Cabinet member under the Social Action's quota of 6 ministerial posts. Montri and Khasem, a dear friend of Suchinda's, have been at odds since Montri was ruled "unusually wealthy" by the NPKC [National Peace-Keeping Council]-appointed assets investigation committee last February. Montri had apparently hoped that coopting Khasem as secretary-general ought to have gotten him off the hook. Instead the committee ordered the confiscation of more than Bt300 million [baht] of Montri's assets.

Montri's shabby treatment of Kasem will certainly not endear him to Suchinda. How he will fit in as deputy premier and work with Suchinda is hard to imagine.

Chat Thai seems to be having the least difficulty bending with the wind and accommodating every wish of the military. Chief adviser Gen Praman Adireksan, who is also appealing the confiscation of his assets, is willing to forego any ministerial post; but his son Pongphon will probably get a Cabinet seat in his stead. Sano Thianthong, an "unusually wealthy" politician, may accept a relatively insignificant post in the PM's Office, though he was at first tipped to be the industry minister. And Watthana Atsawahem, also found "unusually wealthy" by the investigation committee, will be grateful just to return to being deputy interior minister, a post he held in the Chatchai administration. It was on Watthana's political coat-tails that party leader ACM [Air Chief Marshal] Sombun Rahong rode to victory in his first election in Samut Prakan.

Chat Thai secretary-general Banhan Sinlapa-acha, arguably the most powerful man in the party, wants to be education minister, a rather unglamorous job, and left the communicationss minister's post to Sombun. Most politicians consider the communications ministry one of the most "desirable" economic ministries because it

handles multi-billion-baht public projects. Banhan apparently knows this is not the time to take a high-profile portfolio.

The party with the worst internal struggle for Cabinet posts is Samakkhi Tham, where senior executives are divided into factions. Now the noisiest faction is that of Buntheng Thongsawat, the 80-year-old chief adviser to the party executive committee, who may not be given any Cabinet post. Gen Athit Kamlang-ek, chief adviser to the party, may get a deputy premiership. This, according to Buntheng, is an affront to him as she was one of the original founders, whereas Athit joined the party much later after abandoning his Puangchon Chaothai Party.

Moreover, Samakkhi Tham secretary-general Thiti Nakhonthap's faction is clamouring for a Cabinet post for Thiti, though Thiti had earlier vowed not to take anything in return for his work as the manager of the Samakkhi Tham election campaign. Samakkhi Tham MPs in the Northeast are also unhappy with the share of Cabinet posts going to their group, charging that party leader Narong favours his own backers from the North. The largest party in the Suchinda coalition will likely be full of dissent by the time it has agreed on its choice of ministers.

Under these circumstances, it is already certain that the the days of the Suchinda Cabinet (at least the first Suchinda Cabinet) are numbered, though it has not yet even been formed.

Pro-Democracy MPs Continue Protest

BK1504023992 Bangkok THE NATION in English 15 Apr 92 p A1, A2

[Text] All Phalang Tham Party MPs are to be clad in black every time they enter Parliament as part of their ongoing protest against the appointment of Gen Suchinda Khraprayun as prime minister.

The protest will start tomorrow when Parliament convenes its first working session. Tomorrow's move will be in concert with the call by the Campaign for Popular Democracy [CPD] for people to wear black on the same day.

In a political gimmick to keep up pressure on the new, non-elected prime minister, Phalang Tham Party leader Maj Gen Chamlong Simuang yesterday showed his letter to Suchinda, urging "his respected elder brother" to step down as soon as possible.

The party's campaign will be run under the slogan: "It's better to die than telling a lie," which is to be emblazoned on the MPs' black shirts and on car stickers to be distributed by the party.

The MPs are hoping to be backed by demonstrators being mobilized by the CPD, a high-profile academics-led organization trying to curb the military's influence in politics.

The CPD yesterday invited the public to join a protest in front of Parliament tomorrow and asked would-be demonstrators to wear black.

"If you have no time to join the protest, please wear black while going out of your home," CPD spokesman Witit Mantrapon said in an open statement. "Let's protest a dishonest man."

Chamlong said after attending a party meeting in the afternoon that his party's move was in response to the CPD's request for MPs to "mourn the death of democracy".

Yesterday, Chamlong, in an open letter, also urged Prime Minister Suchinda to resign, saying the present political situation was different from 12 years ago when Gen Prem Tinsulanon became an unelected premier with little public resistance.

Chamlong described as being "out dated" the idea of inviting a "neutral person" to be premier.

"Brother (Suchinda), do not believe anyone who tells you that your ascension to the premier's post is similar to that of Gen Prem's" wrote Chamlong, who was ex-premier Prem's secretary general.

Chamlong is a Class 17 graduate from the Chulalomklao Royal Military Academy while Suchinda was a student of Class 5.

Chamlong in the letter questioned how a small country like Thailand could resist the current of democracy sweeping across the world while "a former giant", the Soviet Union, could not.

He said the next government will finally be formed, only to be "killed soon."

The former Bangkok govornor said the Phalang Tham's "black protest" was not intended; to "curse Brother (Suchinda)", but rather to "mourn virtue that has been trampled on."

Chamlong was referring to Suchinda's public vow that he would not accept the premiership. Suchinda said he broke the pledge because he wanted to serve the country.

Chamlong, who is known for living the life of an ascetic, said: "By breaking your word for the sake of the country", Suchinda had created a new and dubious value in Thai society.

Chamlong quoted the phrase "No liar is free from sin" in a Buddhist text to back his argument that Suchinda's reversal of his promise violated Buddhist teachings.

Chamlong said he will wear a black Thai suit tomorrow embroidered with the phrases "Sacrifice your life, but not your word" on the front and "No liar is free from sin" on the back.

After his appointment, Suchinda said repeatedly he is sacrificing his reputation and credibility for the nation's sake.

Chamlong argued that Suchinda's claim was unacceptable as the premier was supposed to act as a role model for the people of the country.

He said there had been too many "sycophants" on the day Suchinda was appointed premier in reference to the crowds of people organized by the former army chief's subordinates to show support for the new premier. Television viewers, finding such flattery nauseating, would develop increasingly antagonistic sentiments towards Suchinda, he added.

In reference to the new Cabinet list, Chamlong said the public were finding would-be ministers "boring old faces" resurfacing.

Some leading politicians ruled "unusually rich" by the military-installed Assets Examination Committee may be renamed ministers, Suchinda has indicated. The politicians played key roles in backing Suchinda as new prime minister.

Chamlong said if the politicians were included in the Cabinet, assets committee chairman Gen Sit Chirarot, Suchinda's former military boss, would be upset.

"Where would Gen Sitthi hide his face then?" asked Chamlong.

He also warned that the next government would be shaky as it commands only 195 votes and would therefore find it difficult to pass crucial bills.

For the next administration to survive, Chamlong said, the leader of the Cabinet would have to spend a lot of money to "maintain loyalty" of his MPs, who otherwise are likely to defect to the opposition bloc.

Military Perceptions of Threats to Government

BK1204033792 Bangkok THE NATION in English 12 Apr 92 p A1

[Editorial: "The Military's Threat Perceptions in the Nation"]

[Text] Gen Suchinda Khraprayun's primary justification for reneging on his promise and taking over the premiership was that he had to make his "great personal sacrifice" in order to save the country from political chaos and other imminent perils. Since the new premier is too busy meeting with all the top brass of the military and welcoming "supporters from all over the country" to answer questions, we have to figure out by ourselves who were fuelling the political chaos and what were threatening the country.

Obviously there was some political chaos when the five pro-military parties couldn't come up with a better nominee for the premiership than Samakkhi Tham party leader Narong Wongwan. The military at first endorsed Narong even though the US suspected him of involvement in drugs trafficking and thus denied Narong's visa application last July. When Narong didn't seem to make any progress in his desperate attempt to clear himself, the military unceremoniously dumped him.

However the military wouldn't just leave the five parties to suffer in disappointment for too long; it quickly sent Suchinda, the army chief and supreme commander, to their rescue. Leaders of the parties were grateful. So grateful that they let Suchinda pick his choices of "grade A" ministries for his hand-picked appointee. Suchinda promptly obliged by choosing the ministries of defence, the interior and the finance with an understanding that he and the military would have a final say on who shall run these key ministries.

Then there was some confusion in Samakkhi Tham, Chat Thai and Social Action parties on whether their five "unusually wealthy" Leaders as well as Narong Wongwan will be eligible for Cabinet posts in the Suchinda administration. All the five believe they are not guilty of anything, even though the assets investigation committee, set up by the military after the Feb 23 coup in 1991, had ruled to confiscate part of their wealth. And Narong himself is confident that he can make a "good" agriculture minister, even though the military thought he wasn't good enough to be premier.

Suchinda and the military seemed quite willing to let Narong and any of the "unusually wealthy" five join his Cabinet. But Suchinda keeps reminding these not-so-perfect politicians that they themselves are to be held responsible for any untoward consequences.

Now the only question is who will get what in these five parties. Some noisy struggle over Cabinet seats is going on in Sammakkhi Tham, and to a lesser degree in Ratsadon and Social Action. This is nothing to worry about, these hungry politicians are always quarrelling among themselves just to while away the time until the next election. It certainly is no threat to the country or the political system.

Now who then could threaten the country and the system? The military didn't say this, but we have the impression that most military leaders strongly objected to the attempt of Gen Chawalit Yongchaiyut, leader of the New Aspiration Party, [NAP], to nominate himself for the premiership.

How Chawalit, the ex-army chief, could be a threat to the country is difficult to see. But it was obvious that the military leaders, especially those in the Class-5 clique and their allies, were fearful that Chawalit would disrupt their power succession order once he became premier.

Of all the elected politicians, Chawalit now has the highest potential to challenge the military ascendancy. His party won 72 of the 360 House seats and came third in the March 22 election behind Samakkhi Tham (79 seats) and Chat Thai (74). Blocking him out of power, Chawalit as well as his upstart party may wilt and wither away. Over half of the NAP's MPs were former MPs recruited from other parties under the prospect that Chawalit would definitely be the next premier.

These veteran politicians detest the thought of languishing in the powerlessness of the Opposition and may become unruly. But this should threaten only the leadership of Chawalit, not the stability of the political system. Similarly Chawalit could threaten the career of Suchinda and his influential cohorts in the Class-5, but not the national security as we understand it.

So where else could the threat possibly come from? The students? Indeed a handful number of them are actively protesting Suchinda's rise to premiership, which they compared to his "second coup" after his first on Feb 23, 1991. But the youths are merely making noises; they couldn't even attract attention of the state-owned mass media. They couldn't possibly be a threat to anyone else except their own vocal cords and grade point average if their protests drag on.

Former MP Chalat Worachat, who has been on hunger strike in front of Parliament since last Tuesday to mourn the "death of democracy", is just one dissenter. The military suspects he is being paid—just like the protesting students—to provoke a violent military response in the hope of igniting a popular uprising. So the one or party bank-rolling all these "trouble-makers" is the real threat the military has been warning the country about.

But how can anyone or any party gain from trying to humiliate Suchinda and upset all the scheme of things that the new army chief Gen Itsaraphong Nunphakdi, the most supportive brother-in-law of Suchinda, and the new supreme commander and air force chief ACM [Air Chief Marshal] Kaset Rotchnanin have so labouriously laid down? We don't know.

Perhaps we are too sinful to see how virtuous Suchinda really is. We may be also too cynical to believe that Gen Itsaraphong and ACM Kaset have nothing else at heart rather than their undiluted love for the country and loyalty to the throne when they made Suchinda the new premier.

Just give us some more time to find out whether Suchinda is really the national saviour. We believe the truth shall manifest itself soon.

Association Calls for End to Intimidation

BK1304040892 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 13 Apr 92 p 1

[Text] The Reporters' Association of Thailand (RAT) called on Prime Minister Gen Suchinda Khraprayun yesterday to see to it that reporters are not intimidated.

Association president Mrs Banyat Tasantiyawet said that Reuters reporter Suthin Wannabovon, and THE STRAITS TIMES reporters Tan Lian chu were threatened because of their coverage of the general election and the formation of the new government.

Mrs Banyat asked that Prime Minister Suchinda see to it that reporters are not intimidated, as it would affect the freedom of the people and also adversely affect the country.

She added that the association is very concerned about the matter because it could mark the beginning of an era when the right to information by the public could be denied.

However, the RAT said they hope that the incident did not originate from Gen Suchinda as a policy to deny freedom of information.

It may have been an act to please the Premier, done by a group of people who did not realise that it could affect the people's outlook on Gen Suchinda's government, the association president said.

On the night of April 5, four unidentified men took a Visnews reporter who was in front of the Army Hall, to a dark corner to acquire information about Mr Suthin.

They left a clear impression of an intention to do Mr Suthin harm.

Prior to the appointment of Gen Suchinda as Prime Minister, Mr Suthin had asked key political figures pointed questions about the nomination of an outsider as prime minister.

Social Problems Resulting From High Growth Viewed

BK1504022192 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 15 Apr 92 p 4

[Editorial: "The Social Cost of Development"]

[Text] Thailand has long been envied around the world as a country where Buddhist principles make for a life of social harmony and compromise, creating what should be an idyllic oasis far from the rat-race of materialistic western societies. Indeed such supposed virtues of the Thai way of life have done as much to draw some five million tourists here from abroad as have picturesque temples, exotic dances and untamed nightlife. It is hard to reconcile such an ideal image of social stability with a statistic revealed in POST ENQUIRY last Sunday that Thailand has the third highest suicide rate in the world.

Something must be wrong somewhere.

The suicide rate seems inexplicably high in a country that is relatively problem-free, compared with, say, the food shortages in the former Soviet Union, racial injustice in South Africa or the regimented social discipline of life in the Japanese work place. Even more alarming is the revelation that a large number of suicides in Thailand are occurring among young people. And, according to psychologist Kitikon Misap, psychiatrists—who are supposed to treat people with emotional problems—are among a professional grouping which, itself, suffers a high rate of suicide.

Researchers say the Government keeps no proper records of suicides or the medical causes that prompt such tragedies. They also complain that the government health services have done little to investigate the reasons for this alarming trend and even less to improve the general standard of mental health among the public at large.

Comparison between the suicide rates in different countries is numerically easy. The World Health Organisation (WHO) keeps statistics for the incidence of all medical problems in almost every country in the world. WHO says on average seven people in every 100,000 take their own lives in Thailand each year. To be sure about the accuracy of this figure it would be necessary to know the standard of reporting in other countries. Even in Thailand where WHO may receive accurate regular reports from public and private hospitals, it is questionable whether the UN organisation hears about every suicide in every hamlet in every province. If a family member is already dead, people have no reason to contact medical authorities and Mahidon University's Yothin Sawaengdi says that details of suicides often do not appear on death certificates. But whatever the precise figure, clearly it is too high.

The high suicide rate raises a wider question about the general standard of mental health and affordable availability of qualified advice and treatment. Suicide, after all, is the ultimate act of desperation, the most extreme statement that a person has had enough of life. It seems reasonable to assume that for every case in which a person decides to take their own life there are many others who feel pretty miserable, yet somehow manage to battle through. Viewed from a national level, such a picture is worrying.

More disturbing still, the increased curve in the suicide rate appears to be following the upward curve in economic development. Mr Santisuk Sophonsiri of the Sathirakoset Nakhaprathip Foundation suggested that the correlation between economic development and weakened mental health may be a result of the breakdown in the traditional social structure that tends to go hand in hand with development.

If he is right, as seems probable, then the Government will have to think hard about the nature of development. There has been much political rhetoric about more equal distribution of income. But if large portions of the population are to be uprooted from generations of living in an agrarian society protected by the safety net of an extended family and become self-supporting and self-contained urban economic units, all in only a decade or so, the Government will need to give as much attention to social planning as it already gives to planning the economy.

National Savings Plan To Be Submitted

BK1404024892 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 14 Apr 92 p 13

[Text] The Bank of Thailand, the Finance Ministry and the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) are to submit to the new Government proposals to launch a national savings campaign.

The move follows growing concern among the Government's economists that the country is not saving enough money to meet its investment needs.

The shortfall in savings is currently estimated at about 8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP)—total production of goods and services in the country. It is expected to remain close to this level for the next five years at least, unless the Government, business and the public can be persuaded to save more.

Without more saving, the trade balance in goods and services—the current account—will remain in deficit and the country's borrowing will have to expand to cover the shortfall over the coming years.

The three agencies are planning to hold a seminar next month as part of their efforts to draw up a package of measures designed to encourage the public to spend less and save more, according to an NESDB source.

The national planning agency is not concerned about the increase in investment over the past few years because the investment has produced economic benefits.

But the expansion of consumer spending has accelerated from an annual average growth rate of 4.6 percent during the Fifth National Plan period (1982-86) to 8.9 percent during the Sixth Plan (1987-91). This has meant a decline in household savings from 10.62 percent of GDP in 1988 to 7.31 per cent of GDP in 1990.

"The cause of the expansion in consumer spending is credit cards. The commercial banks are competing to provide (credit card) services for the public," the NESDB source said.

The decline in household saving is seen as the main cause of a decline in private sector savings as a whole, from 23.37 percent of GDP in 1988 to 11.20 percent of GDP in 1990.

The government sector has been saving more, however, with the official budget in surplus at the end of two consecutive fiscal years and with constraints on state enterprise borrowing.

The source estimated that the country would need as much as 7.02 trillion baht—40.1 percent of one year's GDP—to finance investment from 1992 to 1996 that would maintain annual economic growth at an average of 7-8 percent and to reduce the current account deficit from its present level of more than 8 percent of GDP to the safer level of 3-5 percent of GDP.

If the new Government did not launch serious savings mobilisation policies the country would face a crisis as the savings-investment gap and current account deficit soared, the source said.

"If the Government does nothing to encourage the mobilisation of public savings, we can expect the country's current account deficit to be 6.6 percent of GDP, on average, by the end of the Seventh Plan (1996). Although as a percentage of GDP the current account deficit will fall, it will still be a large sum of money," the source said.

He warned that unless the problem was tackled effectively, Thai interest rates would have to rise and the value of the baht would decline.

257 Billion Baht Trade Deficit Suffered in 1991

BK1104054592 Bangkok Radio Thailand Network in English 0000 GMT 11 Apr 92

[Text] Thailand suffered a trade deficit of 257 billion baht last year, an increase of only 2.3 billion baht over that of 1990. A report by the research department of the Siam Commercial Bank shows that Thailand's exports last year expanded by 23.1 percent to 718 billion baht. This is because of a higher export value of industrial products. Import values in 1991 rose only 16.4 percent to about 975 billion baht. The slight increase in import values was due to less oil imports.

The report also says that during the period, the service and [word indistinct] transfer surpluses declined markedly, reflecting a slow increase in earnings from tourism and remittances from Thai workers overseas. The country's international reserves amounted to 18.4 billion U.S. dollars, equivalent to 5.7 months of imports.

Vietnam

Hanoi Notes State Department Views on Relations

BK1504045692 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2300 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] On 13 April, in a prepared statement, U.S. State Department Spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said the U.S. decision to lift the telecommunications embargo on Vietnam was made in return for Vietnam's positive moves on the MIA-POW issue as well as its continued support for the Cambodian peace accord.

She said that this progress shows the U.S. intention to fulfill its commitments because Vietnam has fulfilled its pledges. This is in conformity with the U.S. policy on gradually normalizing relations with Vietnam as previously announced.

Hanoi Reports on Upcoming Visit by U.S. Senators

BK1504050892 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] A group of five American Senators of the MIA-POW Special Committee of the U.S. Senate [as heard] will visit Southeast Asia from April 16-27. The Senators will travel to Honolulu, Bangkok, and Phnom Penh.

The delegation will come to Hanoi on April 23 to discuss the MIA-POW issues with Vietnamese officials and other experts and the U.S. MIA Office in Hanoi. The delegation then will travel to Hong Kong and Laos.

EC, Japan To Provide More Aid to Repatriation

BK1404130492 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2300 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] On 13 April, the European Community (EC) issued a communique saying that Japan, Italy, Denmark, and Norway had committed to contribute 6.4 million dollars to the resettlement of Vietnamese repatriates. Previously, EC pledged to donate 29 million dollars to this program.

As estimated by EC, about 127 million dollars will be needed to implement the above-mentioned program for two and a half years.

Russian Government's Resignation, Conflict Viewed

BK1404145092 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] The Russian Government on Monday declared its resignation. On the same day, Russian President Boris Yeltsin urged his Cabinet to continue its work. Our radio has more to say about the situation in the republic.

The Russian Federation has in the last several months been caught in an all-out crisis, but until now contradictions and issues have been exposed, particularly at the recent Sixth Russian People Deputies' Congress.

At this congress many deputies strongly criticized and expressed dissatisfaction at the government economic and social reforms, the policies on adaptation, finance, credit, investment, industry, agriculture, and other fields. The congress adopted decrees to give more power to the president as stipulated by the Constitution.

For this very reason the Russian Government has declared its resignation. In its statement the Russian Government said that the resolution to the Congress of the Russian People's Deputies continues to approach its chosen policies of reforms.

In his plans to trump up the demands for his resignation, Russian President Yeltsin said that he would be ready to meet this demand in three months. Because, in his words, this unstable country needs his presence. He also asked his government to continue its work. President Yeltsin said he would make a decision whether he would accept his government's resignation or not at the end of the current congress of the Russian people's deputies.

Meanwhile, the First Vice Premier of Russia Mr. Yegor Gaydar said the Russian Cabinet's resignation would be reversed if the congress reconsidered its resolution and President Yeltsin continued to demand for the maintenance of the Cabinet. The situation in Russia continues to develop with complications.

Birthday Greetings Sent to DPRK President

BK1404153992 Hanoi VNA in English 1515 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA April 14—Vietnamese leaders have extended their greetins to Kim Il-song, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on his 80th birthday.

In a joint congratulatory message, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Do Muoi, and State Council President Vo Chi Cong said: "The Vietnamese Party, Government and people have always highly appreciated your substantial contributions to the revolutionary cause of the Korean people as well as to the development of the friendship between Vietnam and Korea".

They expressed Vietnam's solidarity, friendship, and support for Korea's socialist construction and struggle for national reunification in peace and sovereignty.

They said they hoped that the friendship and cooperation between the two parties, governments and peoples would further consolidate and develop.

Reception Marks Birthday

BK1404161192 Hanoi VNA in English 1520 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA April 14—DPR Korean Ambassador to Vietnam Li Hong gave a reception here this evening to mark the 80th birthday of Kim Il-song, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Among his Vietnamese guests were Pham The Duyet, Politburo member of the CPV [Communist Party of Vietnam] Central Committee; Nguyen Quyet, vice state president; Tran Quang Co, deputy foreign minister; Trinh Ngoc Thai, deputy head of the External Relations Commission of the party Central Committee; and Le Van Dy, president of the Vietnam-DPRK Friendship Association.

Government, Party Delegation Leaves for DPRK

BK1004153492 Hanoi VNA in English 1434 GMT 10 Apr 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA April 10—A government and party delegation led by Vo Tran Chi, Politburo member of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee today left for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to attend the celebration of the 80th birthday of Kim Il-song, general secretary of the Workers Party of Korea and president of the DPRK.

Vo Van Kiet Congratulates UK's John Major

BK1404155392 Hanoi VNA in English 1500 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA April 14—Chairman of the Council of Ministers Vo Van Kiet has congratulated Mr. John Major on his renomination as prime minister of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Northen Ireland.

In his congratulatory message, Chairman Kiet expressed his wish for further promotion of the friendship and multisided cooperation, especially in the fields of economy, trade and investment, in the coming period, for the interests of both countries and for peace, stablility, cooperation and development in Southeast Asia and the rest of the world.

Australian Government Grants Aid, Signs Tax Pact

BK1404155992 Hanoi VNA in English 1516 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA April—Australia has decided to grant over USD 100 million bilateral aid for the 1992-1995 period to Vietnam, said Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce Senator John Button in his meeting with Premier Vo Van Kiet here April 13. Minister John Button and Treasurer John Dawkins are leading an Australian Government delegation to visit Vietnam from April 11. They had working sessions with Minister of Trade and Tourism Le Van Triet, Minister of Finance Hoang Quy, Chairman of the State Planning Committee Do Quoc Sam, Chairman of State Committee for Cooperation and Investment Dau Ngoc Xuan, and Minister of Heavy Industry Tram Lum. Host and guest exchanged views on how to promote the economic and trade ties between the two countries. The Australian guest also paid a courtesy visit to Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam.

On April 13, Hoang Quy empowered by the Vietnamese Government and John Dawkins empowered by the Australian Government signed a double taxation agreement. Australian Ambassador Michael Potts, was on hand at the above-said events.

Radio Applauds Australian Aid

BK1404135692 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] The Australian Government on Monday announced a four-year $A100 million bilateral aid program with Vietnam after 12 years of interruption. On this issue, our radio has this to say:

The aid program worth about $US76 million was informed to Vietnamese Premier Vo Van Kiet by two visiting Australian Government ministers: Treasurer Paul Keating and Minister of Industry, Technology and Commerce, Senator John Button. During their current visit to Vietnam, the two Australian ministers said the program would begin immediately with the $A4 million grant for commodities, malaria control, and training program including English-language training for Vietnamese students.

With this aid program Australia becomes Vietnam's biggest aid donor which is strengthening its ties with Hanoi. In fact, the past two decades have witnessed Australia's progress in its relations with Vietnam. In 1974 the Australian Government invited Mr. Nguyen Co Thach, the then-Vietnamese foreign minister, for a visit and during the 1980s Australia was one of the countries very active in settling the Cambodia issue. Though having been closely bound to the United States, Australia has developed its relations with Vietnam in spite of the U.S. trade embargo.

In November last year Australia was the first country to have announced its resumption of aid to Vietnam. Of late, Japan and some Western European countries have also declared their aid resumption. But their decision came only after Australian move. Speaking to the Australian guests, Vietnamese Premier Vo Van Kiet highly appreciated this precious assistance of the Australian Government and people to Vietnam, particularly the resumption of aid in late 1991 and the present substantial aid program to Vietnam for national construction. He stressed that these are very significant to strengthening the existing friendship between the two countries.

French Banks Finance Aircraft Purchases

BK1004145492 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 8 Apr 92

[Text] Three French banks finance Vietnam to buy planes from the West. Officials of these banks signed in Hanoi Tuesday a credit agreement on $US20 million to buy two ATR planes. These two planes will be handed over to the Vietnamese side in two weeks time.

France Provides Food Aid to Rural Projects

BK1004145692 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 0500 GMT 9 Apr 92

[Text] On 8 April, the French Ministry of Finance informed that France will provide 3,650 tonnes of wheat flour and a food aid of two million francs, equal to $350,000. The aid was stipulated in an agreement signed in Paris last week.

The foodstuffs will be sold in Vietnamese local markets to fund irrigation and rural development projects in Vietnam.

Do Muoi Meets National Assembly Deputies 14 Apr

BK1504041392 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2300 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] At the Presidential Palace in Hanoi on the evening of 14 April, the National Assembly, the Council of State, and the Council of Ministers held a cordial get-together with National Assembly deputies on the occasion of the end of their term. Attending the function were Do Muoi, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam [CPV] Central Committee; Pham Van Dong, adviser to the party Central Committee; Le Quang Dao, chairman of the National Assembly; Vo Van Kiet, chairman of the Council of Ministers; and Nguyen Huu Tho, chairman of the Vietnam Fatherland Front [VFF] Central Committee.

Comrade Vo Chi Cong, chairman of the Council of State and adviser to the party Central Committee, on behalf of the National Assembly's presidium and the Councils of State and Ministers, warmly welcomed all deputies and wished them ever greater achievements in their tasks. He said: During the Eighth National Assembly, deputies have done their best to fulfill all tasks entrusted by the people. One of the greatest achievements of the National Assembly during this term was its positive efforts in implementing and institutionalizing the renovation undertaking set by the CPV. The National Assembly has integrated its efforts on amending the constitution, formulating laws, carrying out inspection work, and discussing and making decisions on important issues of the nation. Our National Assembly has step by step improved its activities in the spirit of truly developing democracy. At the current 11th session, the Eighth National Assembly has made great efforts to fulfill a very important mission before ending its term—that is, to pass the fundamentally revised constitution, thereby meeting the aspirations of the people and requirements for the new situation and new tasks of our nation. Generally speaking, these achievements should be attributed to all National Assembly deputies who have made positive contributions and maintained a high sense of responsibility.

National Assembly Issues Communique No. 17

BK1304155992 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Communique No. 17 of the Eighth National Assembly's 11th Session]

[Text] On 13 April 1992, the National Assembly held a plenary session in the conference hall. National Assembly Chairman Le Quang Dao directed the sitting.

In the morning and afternoon sessions, the National Assembly continued its debates and then voted and adopted the Preamble and a number of articles of the draft of the revised Constitution that the deputies deemed it necessary to be reworded. The National Assembly heard the following:

1. A report by Chairman Le Quang Dao suggesting that the National Assembly issue a resolution defining a number of important provisions on the implementation of the 1992 Constitution;

2. Minister of Finance Hoang Quy, on behalf of the Council of Ministers, answered questions concerning the 1992 state budget;

3. On behalf of the Council of Ministers, Do Quoc Sam, head of the State Planning Commission, answered questions concerning the construction of the north-south 500-KV powerline;

4. On behalf of the Council of Ministers, Cao Sy Kiem, governor of the State Bank, answered questions concerning cash shortages;

5. On behalf of the Council of Ministers, Phan Van Tien, head of the State Pricing Commission, answered questions concerning the need to increase the prices of electricity; and

6. Vu Dinh Cu, deputy head of the National Assembly Science and Technology Committee, presented the committee's viewpoints on the construction of the north-south 500-KV powerline.

Next, a number of deputies aired their views on the various answers given by some members of the Council of Ministers.

In the evening, the deputies debated on the draft of amendments to the law on the organization of the National Assembly.

On 14 April, the National Assembly will continue its plenary session in the conference hall.

National Assembly 14 Apr Session Reported

BK1404135392 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1100 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Today, 14 April, the Eighth National Assembly's 11th Session continued to take place in the conference hall. The deputies debated on the revised law on the organization of the National Assembly and the revised law on elections of National Assembly deputies. National Assembly Vice Chairman Phung Van Tuu directed the sitting.

In the first part of its morning sitting, the National Assembly focused its debate on the remaining chapters of the law on the organization of the National Assembly.

As for Chapter 2 dealing with National Assembly committees, after debating for a while, the National Assembly voted down a proposal for setting up a separate committee, namely the Judicial and Public Aspirations Committee.

Regarding Chapter 4 dealing with National Assembly deputies, many debaters aired their views, further clarifying Articles 38, 42, and 52 by either adding or dropping some terms or groups of terms to make the wording look more appropriate. Afterward, they voted and adopted these articles.

Regarding Chapter 5 dealing with the timing of National Assembly sessions, the deputies voted to pass a proposal for the National Assembly to meet twice a year without specifying which month the National Assembly will be held.

The National Assembly also voted that regarding Articles 70 and 71, it is necessary to mention only the elections of National Assembly chairman and vice chairmen without having to specify the number of National Assembly vice chairmen.

The deputies also voted in favor of the contents of the draft law governing the organization of the National Assembly.

In the latter part of this morning's sitting as well as in the whole course of this afternoon's sitting, the National Assembly held discussions on the draft law governing the elections of National Assembly deputies based on the majority of views aired by the deputies in previous sittings.

Comrade Vu Mao, on behalf of the session Secretariat and the Draft Law Compiling Board, presented some issues to be further discussed and clarified in connection with this law. After that, the deputies discussed and voted on a number of points and articles of the draft law governing the elections of National Assembly deputies. Next, they discussed Chapter 1 and unanimously agreed with the way the draft law was presented. Regarding Article 5 of this chapter, the deputies overwhelmingly voted in disfavor of a proposal for including this article in Chapter 1 of the draft law.

This afternoon, the National Assembly continued its debate on the remaining chapters of the law on elections of National Assembly deputies. Regarding Chapter 2 dealing with the number of deputies, after holding careful discussions the deputies unanimously agreed with the draft provision that Hanoi Municipality should have an appropriate number of deputies to match its position as the political, economic, and cultural center of the entire nation. Afterward, the National Assembly voted and adopted Chapters 2, 3, and 4 with a majority of votes.

Regarding Article 30 dealing with delegates to voters' conferences, after holding careful discussions the National Assembly overwhelmingly voted in favor of a draft provision that nominees and independent candidates representing organizations, agencies, and units all have the right to attend voters' conferences.

Regarding Chapter 6 dealing with election campaigns, the deputies debated and contributed many appropriate views. Finally, they voted in favor of a proposal that, except for Article 39 dealing with the right of nominees or independent candidates to participate in election campaigns and meetings with voters organized by the Fatherland Front, the rest of this chapter should be abolished altogether.

Regarding Chapter 10 dealing with the law on elections of National Assembly deputies, after hearing many suggestions, the National Assembly unanimously agreed that this chapter should be abolished and that it would be more appropriate to include the contents of this chapter in the law on the organization of the National Assembly.

Tomorrow, 15 April, the National Assembly will continue to meet in the conference hall.

Communique No. 18 Issued

BK1404144692 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Communique No. 18 of the Eighth National Assembly's 11th Session]

[Text] On 14 April the National Assembly held a plenary session at the conference hall under the direction of its vice chairman Phung Van Tuu. The National Assembly deputies continued to debate, vote, and pass motions on amended bills concerning organization of the National Assembly and the election of National Assembly deputies, issues about which opinions still differ.

On 15 April, the National Assembly will continue its plenary meeting in the conference hall.

National Assembly Passes Constitution

BK1504072492 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 0500 GMT 15 Apr 92

[Text] Today, 15 April, the Eighth National Assembly's 11th Session continued its plenary session at the Ba Dinh Conference Hall in Hanoi. Comrade Le Quang Dao, chairman of the National Assembly, directed the session.

The National Assembly heard Comrade Le Quang Dao present and clarify a number of issues of the revised Constitution that require further viewpoints from the deputies.

After additional viewpoints were given on these issues, Comrade Vu Mao, on behalf of the Constitution Amendment Committee, read the text of the revised Constitution. Afterward, the National Assembly unanimously voted to pass the Constitution.

This afternoon, the National Assembly will continue its plenary session at the conference hall.

Radio Reports Foreign Investment in Country

BK1004150492 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 9 Apr 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] Sweden is pursuing a relatively positive policy toward Vietnam. Earlier last week, Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce of Sweden Birgit Erngren visited Vietnam. She noted that Vietnam is ready to do business with foreign countries and that business opportunities have been opened up for both countries. She also said that in the future, governors of Swedish companies will set up their offices in Ho Chi Minh City.

Before leaving Vietnam she reaffirmed that the Swedish Government will assist its businessmen in doing business with Vietnam. Meanwhile, France has also set up its relations with Vietnam. A delegation of 30 French companies and banks led by Mr. (Andrevaux), president of the National Council of Proprietors, have visited Vietnam.

At present, France undertakes 27 industrial projects in Vietnam with a total capital of US$218 million. Earlier, a delegation of the administration and businessmen of Toulouse paid a visit to Hanoi. Mr (Le Cachad), vice president of Toulouse Chamber of Commerce and Industry, head of the delegation said: The visiting delegation wants to expand its business with Vietnam. In the coming future, he said, Vietnam is likely to participate in three international fairs in Toulouse to help the two sides understand each other and better their business and cooperation.

A 16-member delegation of Singapore is now in Vietnam to sound the probability for cooperation in construction. At the end of this week, an Australian headed by minister of finance and minister of industry, technology and trade will come to Vietnam to discuss Australian development aid to Vietnam.

In April in Tokyo, an international seminar on Vietnam economy will be organized in Vietnam. It will be attended by former prime minister of Singapore Lee Kwan Yew. He is expected to share his previous experiences with Vietnam in developing market economy.

Vo Van Kiet Attends Immunization Conference

BK1104074992 Hanoi VNA in English 0642 GMT 11 Apr 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA April 11—A national conference was held here on April 10 by the Ministry of Public Health to review the implementation of the expanded programme on immunization in 1991 and step up this work in 1992.

Chairman of the Council of Ministers Vo Van Kiet attended and spoke to the conference.

Representatives of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and of the World Health Organization (WHO) also attended. Prof. Pham Song, minister of public health, reported to the conference that in 1991, more than 90 percent of children under one year of age in 20 provinces and cities were vaccinated against the six major child-killer diseases. However, nearly 20 percent of children, mostly in mountain provinces, have not been vaccinated.

Addressing the conference, Chairman Vo Van Kiet pointed to the paramount importance and long-term impact of the EPI [expansion unknown] on the future of the nation. To carry out well the EPI is also an effective contribution to the implementation of family planning, he said.

He thanked all international organisations and foreign governments, particularly UNICEF and WHO, for their effective assistance, and called on them to render more

assistance to the EPI, especially in the current drive to eradicate polio and tetanus among the new-borns.

Decree on Import-Export Activities Issued

BK1304140192 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1100 GMT 12 Apr 92

[Text] The Council of Ministers has issued a decree on state management over import-export activities. Under this decree, importers and exporters are free to operate provided that they pay taxes determined by the import-export tax law. Except for those commodities belonging to the list of banned import-export products, all other import-export items under the quota control system and special materials and equipment shall also be subjected to state administrative management.

The decree also defines other kinds of products and services falling under a different management system other than the one set by this decree. These include gold; silver; precious stones; gifts; sample products; inherited property; postal parcels; personal effects of Vietnamese citizens entering or leaving the country; personal effects of foreign nationals or members of foreign organizations entering or leaving the country; goods and other articles belonging to diplomatic missions and international organizations in Vietnam; goods in transit; goods exchanged between people living in border areas; import-export products exchanged among the various processing centers or between processing centers and foreign firms; and tourist, banking, insurance, and postal services as well as air, railway, sea, and land transportation services.

Producers of export goods are eligible for a business tax exemption as specified under Article 2 of the business tax law. If these producers invest their profits in the production of export goods, they shall be eligible for an income tax reduction as specified under Article 22 of the income tax law. The Ministry of Finance is to provide specific guidance over this tax exemption or tax reduction.

Producers of commodities capable of replacing imported goods shall be eligible for a business and income tax reduction for the initial stage of their operations. Business establishments producing export goods under contracts with foreign firms shall not be required to pay taxes on those imported equipment and materials needed for their production operations. A business tax exemption shall also apply to the money needed for the production of those export commodities under contracts with foreign firms.

Light Industry Posts Record Gain

BK1304150992 Hanoi VNA in English 1449 GMT 13 Apr 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA April 13—Enterprises under the Ministry of Light Industry achieved in the first three months of this year a combined output value estimated at 24.3 percent of the plan set for the whole year, a record high over the last 10 years.

The value, representing an increase of 27.4 percent against the January-March period last year, was made possible by stable production in some important enterprises despite the country.

Four factories of the Union of Plastics Producers and Traders (VINAPLAST) in Ho Chi Minh City earned 24 billion dong (roughly USD 2.4 million) wholesale. The figure accounted for 25 percent of the 1992 plan. Yet, profits were not as high as last year because production costs rose dramatically. Electricity outs caused the loss of at least four full days every week, and much money had gone to the purchase of diesel motors and fuels to generate sufficient power for production.

Production of quality products was up five percent over last year in the leatherware, garment and textile industries.

This success was attributed to new equipment and technologies. The southern textile industry has always been the pace-setter in modernisation. More than 190 million dollars invested over the course of 17 years has enabled it to raise combined yearly output to 180 million metres of fabrics, or more than half of the national output planned for this year.

Most investment into leatherware production last year went into tanning. The Saigon Tannery in Ho Chi Minh City and the Thuy Khe Tannery in Hanoi, the two largest in the country, are having new tanning lines installed worth roughly 8 million dollars.

Industrial Processing Zones To Be Built by 1995

BK1204140892 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2300 GMT 8 Apr 92

[Text] Vietnam plans to build big industrial processing zones in Haiphong, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City from 1992-1995 with capital mainly coming from joint ventures with foreign countries. With regards to the industrial zone in Hanoi, an investment of $400 million is required.

At the moment, related organs have defined the boundaries and construction areas of the industrial processing zones. They are setting up plans to cooperate with foreign companies for the construction of these projects. Some private Japanese and South Korean companies have signed contracts or documents for the construction.

First Quarter Export Volume Reaches $420 Million

BK1204114892 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2300 GMT 10 Apr 92

[Text] Due to their active marketing, import-export business units in the first quarter of this year exported $420 million worth of goods. This is an increase of 25 percent compared to the same period last year and is the highest increase so far.

NHAN DAN Article on Power Shortages in South

BK1104115592 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1000 GMT 11 Apr 92

[From press review]

[Text] Today's NHAN DAN carries an article by Tran Kham, on the power shortage in South Vietnam. It says: First of all, we must exert efforts at central and local levels to deal with the shortages and to generate more electricity.

If the southern provinces and cities generate five to 10 megawatts of electricity, the situation in the south will be less severe. In Ho Chi Minh City alone, there are 78 factories of the Light Industry Ministry and 48 factories of the Heavy Industry Ministry. If each installation can produce one megawat of electricity on its own, the situation will certainly improve.

The energy sector has looked squarely at the facts and assessed the causes of the power shortages. Together with other sectors, localities and production installations it will certainly find more effective measures to solve this problem for the Southern provinces.

Government Experiments To Settle Land Disputes

BK1104080392 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 9 Apr 92

[Text] On 8 and 9 April, the government's cadre organization committee and the state survey and map department coordinated with each other to organize a conference to provide guidance for the implementation of Directive 364 of the Council of Ministers chairman on the settlement of land disputes related to the administrative boundaries of provinces, cities, districts and villages, and to establish a national administrative boundary map.

Attending the conference were representatives of the cadre organization committee, the finance service, the planning committee, and the land management committees of 26 provinces and cities directly subordinate to the central government from Binh Tri Thien Province northward.

After Minister Phan Ngoc Tuong, chief of the cadre organization committee, opened the conference, Comrade Tran Cong Tuyen, deputy chief of the cadre organization committee, reported on the disputes of administrative boundaries of provinces, districts, and villages. Since 1980, our state has increased 629 administrative units to include 13 units of provincial level, 90 units of district level and equivalent, and 526 units of village, hamlet, and town levels. In the recent past, there have been some 204 disputes over hamlet boundaries, 55 disputes between provinces, 79 disputes between districts, and 70 disputes between villages.

Many cases of prolonged dispute over the administrative boundaries have not been settled promptly. Meanwhile, new violent disputes have occurred, causing serious consequences to the life and property of the people.

Land disputes related to administrative boundaries are mainly caused by our lack of systematic managerial control over land boundaries. For this main reason, the Council of Ministers entrusted the government's cadre organization committee and the state survey and map department with the task of guiding localities in settling land disputes and establishing maps of administrative boundaries.

The conferees unanimously agreed to the view that though it is somewhat late to establish maps now, the task should be done expeditiously to managerially control the country and put an end to land disputes. The state survey and map department has provided guidance in terms of procedures, scopes, and plans for localities to establish maps of administrative boundaries. The government's cadre organization committee has chosen two provinces for experimentation: Quang Tri to represent the central Vietnam and Ha Bac to represent the north.

Vietnamese Refugees Repatriated by UN

BK1104120892 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 11 Apr 92

[Text] A group of 106 Vietnamese asylum seekers returned to Vietnam Friday. The repatriation was carried out under the sponsorship of the UN High Commission for Refugees. This is the eleventh repatriation drive under the program.

Australia

Pressure Grows To Soften Stand on Refugees

BK1404085592 Hong Kong AFP in English 0814 GMT 14 Apr 92

[Text] Sydney, April 14 (AFP)—Canberra came under renewed pressure Tuesday to soften its stand on refugees as Australian officials admitted bungling pleas for asylum by Cambodian survivors of Pol Pot's regime.

Lawyers fighting to overturn a decision rejecting asylum applications from 37 boat people said the refugee question was an issue of national morality which had gone beyond the courts.

Lawyer Colin McDonald said a glaring defect in the refugee process, highlighted by the boat people, was "the need for a component of humanitarian consideration to deserving cases such as those Cambodian asylum seekers."

His plea followed a court hearing in Darwin at which the government admitted defects in processing refugee applications.

The 37 are among more than 400 refugees who have been held in detention centres for up to two and a half years awaiting decisions on their fate. Most are Cambodians although there are others, including Vietnamese and Chinese.

In interviews published or broadcast the refugees have told harrowing tales of how they lost parents, children or other relatives through starvation or brutality under the Pol Pot regime.

Many have had applications turned down and are now awaiting deportation on the grounds that they are not political refugees but economic refugees and queue jumpers.

For weeks, Catholic leaders and others have been urging a more humanitarian approach by Australia, at least to the Cambodians.

Archbishop Barry Hickey of Perth has offered to find homes for 400 refugees now awaiting deportation in a personal plea to the government to allow them to stay temporarily.

The Australian newspaper has also drawn attention to their plight, arguing the government's record in refugee policy was "a disastrous mix of spasmodic emotionalism, intermittent nastiness, incoherence, ad hockery and mismanagement."

But Immigration Minister Gerry Hand has said he will not intervene in the process by which immigration authorities, using U.N. criteria, decide who should be granted refugee status.

He has rejected appeals to allow them temporary visas until elections in Cambodia next year.

"It is my firm view that the proper processes of refugee assessment have been followed throughout," Hand said on April 8.

Barrister Trevor Riley, representing Hand, admitted to the Federal Court in Darwin Tuesday that there had been defects in processing the refugee applications and a departmental review of their cases would be carried out.

McDonald said he would ask the hearing, which resumes Wednesday, to free the refugees on grounds that their continued detention after two-and-a-half years was illegal.

In a radio interview later, he said: "This issue will not go away and it is an issue that Australia must face."

It was time the government and bureaucrats looked at the so-far unanswered proposal by the Catholic church to find temporary homes for the Cambodians.

He rejected government claims that they were economic refugees or queue jumpers, saying there was no queue of Cambodians when they left.

"There was no semblance of diplomatic relations, there was no embassy, no consulate, we didn't recognise the government," McDonald said. "They fled because they had to, not because they wanted to."

Catholic Refugee Service spokesman Petger Hoskins said he believed Hand had lacked some moral leadership in allowing the process to run for such a long time without allowing the Cambodians "access to some humanitarian provisions."

Asylum May Undermine Peace Process

BK1504043592 Hong Kong AFP in English 0403 GMT 15 Apr 92

[By Jack Taylor]

[Excerpts] Sydney, April 15 (AFP)—Australia is refusing asylum to Cambodian refugees because of fears it would undermine the Cambodian peace process, a government official admitted Wednesday.

Harriett Swift, senior adviser to Immigration Minister Gerry Hand, said the risk was that to accept the boat people as refugees would suggest it was unsafe to return to Cambodia.

"If we said it was unsafe for them to return and yet safe for millions of others in Cambodia, it would undermine the whole peace process," she told AFP.

Canberra has a major stake in the Cambodian peace accord, of which Foreign Minister Gareth Evans was the principal architect.

Swift made the remarks in response to a request for comment about mounting pressure on the government to introduce a humanitarian element into its consideration of applications for asylum by Cambodian boat people.

Catholic leaders, lawyers, a national newspaper and others have been arguing that the refugee question has become a major issue of national morality in Australia.

The Cambodians are seen as an especially deserving case because of their previous suffering and because they never until recently had any prospect of legal entry to Australia. The two countries have only recently resumed diplomatic contact. [passage omitted]

An Immigration Department spokesman told AFP Wednesday he could not comment on individual cases but all illegal migrants had to apply and be processed in the same way.

However, Swift said that as illegal entrants "these people are not entitled to consideration under the humanitarian guidelines which are an adjunct to the refugee program."

The decision whether they could stay was ultimately a ministerial one, but because the Cambodians were illegal entrants they did not have the right of appeal to the minister.

Swift said the minister had decided a year ago that if the circumstances were appropriate he would consider making a special legal position for the boat people.

But she said the minister had assessed the situation regarding the Cambodians last week and decided against making them an exception "because of the improved situation in Cambodia."

Swift said Australia would look "pretty silly" if it accepted them as migrants while arguing it was safe for millions of others in Cambodia.

But she added that concern for the Cambodian peace process only became a factor once the boat people migrants had failed in their applications for refugee status.

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